



# CHAOTIC SWORD GOD

BOOK 06

*Xin Xing Xiao Yao*

EPUB CREATION BY LISA HAYES

# Chaotic Sword God

(混沌剑神)

by

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# Synopsis

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Jian Chen, the publicly recognized number one expert of the Jianghu. His skill with the sword went beyond perfection and was undefeatable in battle, After a battle with the exceptional expert Dugu Qiubai who had gone missing over a hundred years ago, Jian Chen succumbed to his injuries and died.

After death, Jian Chen's spirit was transmigrated into a completely foreign world. Following an extremely fast growth, his enemies piled up one after another before becoming gravely injured once more. On the gates of death, his spirit had mutated, and from that moment henceforth, he would tread on a completely different path of the art of the sword to become the sword god of his generation.

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# Chapter 501: Saint Tier Battle Skill

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“Master, Artefacts are extremely powerful. This howlite is a precious material that can be used to make the Azure and Violet Twin Swords. When you manage to make both, you will come to understand the power of Artefacts.” Ziying spoke.

At a thought, a happy feeling spread through Jian Chen’s chest. “If I can remake the Azure and Violet Twin Swords, that would be excellent and would make up for my lack of weapon.” With that, Jian Chen stopped talking for a moment before immediately asking, “Ziying, Qingsuo, just what needs to be done in order to reforge the Azure and Violet Twin Swords? Would this howlite be enough to make the weapons extremely strong?”

“Naturally not. Howlite is only a material. In order to make an Artefact strong, it requires even more materials and items that require careful selection. However, master needn’t worry about this problem, Qingsuo and Ziying will take care of it.” Ziying spoke with pride.

“Then when will the Azure and Violet Twin Swords be finished!” Jian Chen was somewhat impatient. To him, a sword was an extremely important thing. Ever since his own Light Wind Sword had been destroyed, his heart’s longing for a sword had never been quenched. Because of his strength as a Heaven Saint Master, he was afraid that any weapon he used wouldn’t be sufficient enough to handle his abuse. Thus, he had never looked for a replacement to use, but now that he knew of a weapon he could create even stronger than a Saint Weapon, the Azure and Violet Twin Swords, he could hardly contain his excitement.

Ziying and Qingsuo could clearly feel the intense longing for a sword in Jian Chen's words, causing them to hesitate for a moment. Responding, Ziying spoke, "Master, forging the Azure and Violet Twin Swords is not a very difficult process. It only requires a few individuals that can control fire to help. However, the difficulty lies with the materials themselves and gathering them. The howlite is just one of the materials, but that is far from enough."

"Then what materials are needed? I will have the Qinhuang Kingdom help me straight away." Jian Chen's heart couldn't help but beat wildly. He had been brought into the strange land by Ziying and Qingsuo many times before, so his heart knew about the powerful weapon that were the Sword Spirits. Thus, he was very impatient about being able to use such a powerful weapon.

Although Jian Chen had the strength of a Heaven Saint Master, had the Origin Energy of the Sword Spirits, and was an uncontested existence among those in the Heaven Saint Master realm, Heaven Saint Masters did not stand at the pinnacle of the Tian Yuan Continent. Above them were the Saint Rulers and the many other paragon existences that lived as hermits.

Despite not knowing just how terrifying of an existence the Saint Rulers were, Jian Chen could make a rough estimate. Elder Xiu back in Longevity Valley had shown him that Saint Rulers were merely the tip of the iceberg. Even with his usage of the Origin Energy, he hadn't been able to cause a speck of a threat to Elder Xiu.



Jian Chen had already started trouble with the Shi family and the Jiede clan, both of whom had Saint Rulers behind them. After destroying the treasured heirlooms that were the Ruler Armaments, Jian Chen was sure that the two families would never let him go. In the case the Saint Rulers were to make a move, Jian Chen would have no way to defend himself.

Aside from the Shi family and Jiede clan, there was still the Huang family and the most recent Sect of Dragon and Tiger. Both parties were not easy to bully, and the Huang family knew that he was in possession of a Saint Ruler's Skeleton. Although he had once helped out the Huang family, there was no guarantee that the Huang Family would bite the hand that had once helped him in order to acquire the skeleton. After all, Saint Ruler Skeletons were extremely valuable.

As for the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, they were now another headache to deal with because of the mess that had occurred from the matter with the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom. The Sect of Dragon and Tiger also had hidden hermits that did not fear the Qinhuang Kingdom. Although Jian Chen's status as the Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom gave him some protection, there might be some Saint Rulers that were willing to give face to the Qinhuang Kingdom, but there could possibly be some that didn't. People who would actively chase after Jian Chen.

This was an extremely important matter, but Jian Chen didn't truly worry about them yet. Instead, what he was truly worried about was the white tiger cub. Because if he did not hand over the tiger cub, he would have to worry about the Gilligan clan in the Cross Mountains.

Thus, while Jian Chen looked to be without troubles, the amount of pressure on him was tremendous. This led to him to not bother with the matters of having a wife or kids. His only concern was to increase his own strength.

The problem was after the Heaven Saint Master realm, it was not easy to increase one's strength as before. If Jian Chen were to forego the Origin Energy of the azure and violet Sword Spirits, he wouldn't be strong at all. Therefore, when Jian Chen heard that he could reforge the Azure and Violet Twin Swords, his heart began to beat rapidly.

Ziying and Qingsuo both looked quite troubled. Growing silent for a while, they finally spoke, "Master, the materials needed to reforge the Azure and Violet Twin Swords have no fixed pattern. Furthermore, these materials will most likely be under a completely different name here on the Tian Yuan Continent. If we were to look for them on name alone, we would never be able to find them. Each and every material has a different characteristic, but they would still be hard to find."

"For example, this howlite looks to be nothing different from a regular stone. It is incredibly heavy, but that is it. On the Tian Yuan Continent, there will most likely be many other types of stone that share a similarity to the howlite. These minute differences may vary, and practically no one will be able to differentiate between them all. So having other people help look for them would be of no use either." Ziying spoke helplessly.

"Then does that mean that in order to find the materials needed to reforge the Azure and Violet Twin Swords, only you two will be



able to?” Jian Chen asked.

“Yes, master. Aside from Qingsuo and I, I estimate that no one else would be able to tell these are materials for forging a weapon.” Ziyang replied.

Hearing this, Jian Chen began to grow disappointed. Originally he had thought he could immediately obtain an Artefact sword and resolve his vexed state of having no weapon. However, he didn't think that there would be this problem, leaving him empty-hearted.

Growing silent for a while longer, Jian Chen gradually began to regain his usual mood. Although he couldn't immediately reforge the Azure and Violet Twin Swords, he at least had a new hope for making a weapon. Furthermore, this new weapon would be the incredibly powerful Azure and Violet Sword.

After calming himself, Jian Chen continued to ask, “Ziyang, Qingsuo, just how many materials are needed to reforge the Azure and Violet Twin Swords?”

“Master, our blades were created using the highest grade materials in the past. There were nearly a thousand different things, each one of them being unmatched in their rarity and usage. But master doesn't need that type of blade, and neither does master require an usual type of flame to forge it. All master needs is another type of blade that only requires sixteen materials.”

Terminating his talk with the Sword Spirits, Jian Chen

immediately snapped back to his senses. At the same time, he realized the group, who had been walking behind him, had suddenly appeared right next to him.

“Jian Chen, just what about that stone is enough to make you get lost in thought? What is that stone even? Could it be it has some sort of strange use?” Ming Dong’s voice could be heard asking Jian Chen.

Hearing this, Jian Chen muttered, “This stone is a material used to forge weapons. I’ve been in need of something like this.”

Ming Dong’s face grew extremely solemn when he heard Jian Chen speak. Jian Chen having his Saint Weapon destroyed was not an unknown fact to Ming Dong, since Jian Chen had explained his experience to him.

“Forge a weapon? Imperial Protector, what use do you have for that? Do you plan to use that material to forge yourself a weapon? Any regular weapon pales in comparison to a Saint Weapon in terms of durability and strength. In a battle between Heaven Saint Masters, an ordinary weapon would be as good as a chicken rib — utterly unfavorable.” Qin Wujian asked curiously.

Jian Chen smiled, but he did not offer an explanation. Taking the howlite into his Space Ring, he spoke, “Everyone should take a stroll now. Since everything here belongs to us, take whatever you wish.”

Afterward, everyone separated everywhere, pleased to see if

there would be anyone they would want. As for the gold or silver pearls or other precious commodities, none of them felt inclined to take them, since none of them were exactly lacking in money.

The third level of the treasury was quite big. Jian Chen, by himself, strolled here and there to see if there would be anything else that would be of value to him. After they were done, the rest of the items would be given to the men below to manage or perhaps sell. In the case that he missed something particularly precious, it would be a great loss if it were to be accidentally sold.

Just as Jian Chen walked past a dusty table, his body suddenly came to a stop as he noticed a stone slab on the table.

The stone slab was a square in shape, about a meter long and an inch thick. It looked rather ordinary at first glance, but on the slab, there were several patterns etched in it. The patterns were illegible because of the layer of dust.

Picking up the stone slab from the table, Jian Chen blew off the dust to reveal the patterns etched underneath. However, the pattern was incomplete on the slab. All that could be seen was a single palm holding a blade as it chopped down. The blade was not completely visible because of the small dimensions of the slab, so the blade point could not be seen

When Jian Chen's eyes registered the pattern, his heart immediately felt great shock run through it. An extremely mysterious feeling came bursting forth into his mind, forcing Jian Chen to stare at the picture closely.

Although the pattern wasn't complete and only had a picture of a palm and a blade, Jian Chen felt the power of the world through this picture. In this downward chop, Jian Chen felt that it contained the world within it.

“Th-this is...” Jian Chen's eyes grew wide with utter shock and disbelief. This pattern was no stranger to him. Back in the holy lands of Mercenary City, he had come across a Saint Tier Battle Skill, a battle skill a tier above a Heaven Tier Battle Skill.

This seemingly unspecial slab was actually the strongest battle skill on the Tian Yuan Continent — a Saint Tier Battle Skill.

# Chapter 502: Roping In Ming Dong

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Jian Chen's breathing turned coarse, a Saint Tier Battle Skill was definitely the most valuable battle skill on the Tian Yuan Continent. This was something that even a Saint Ruler would drool at the mouth for. Even among the Saint Rulers, very few had a Saint Tier Battle Skill.

What Jian Chen didn't expect was to find in the treasury of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom an actual Saint Tier Battle Skill. This to him was a gargantuan shock, but the only problem was that this one was broken — it was not a full and clear depiction.

Despite this, Jian Chen was still incomparably joyful. Even a broken Saint Tier Battle Skill was priceless since the profoundness hidden within the patterns still contained a great mystery. Back when Jian Chen had been in the holy lands of Mercenary City, he had been able to absorb some of the fragments of the mysteries of the world. From that, he was able to feel a resonance with the slab in front of him. It was from this resonance that he had been able to tell that this was a broken fragment of a Saint Tier Battle Skill.

Clutching at the stone slab, Jian Chen couldn't help but feel his body shake. This discovery was far too great. Although he was unable to practice any Saint Tier Battle Skills, the stone slab would still be able to help him comprehend the mysteries of the world. To Jian Chen, this stone slab would be the bridge that would take him to the world of Saint Rulers.

The excitement in his heart persisted for a while before Jian Chen was finally able to calm down. Gingerly putting the stone

slab into his Space Ring, he pretended as if nothing had happened and continued to stroll around.

In about the time it took to make a cup of tea, everyone had already searched through the entirety of the treasury, but no one had discovered anything too out of the ordinary. Aside from the howlite and Saint Tier Battle Skill, Jian Chen hadn't received anything else. Despite this, Jian Chen only felt joy and uncontested bliss that couldn't be seen on his face. He knew all too clearly that a Saint Tier Battle Skill was definitely no small matter. If the several Imperial Advisors were to know that he had it, they would definitely try to remove it from him.

“Have everything here collected and taken away.” Jian Chen commanded to the soldiers outside.

“Yes!” The few soldiers immediately headed into the third story with their Space Rings and began to collect everything in sight into them.

While the soldiers busied themselves inside, Jian Chen and the rest gathered around.

“Has anyone found anything of interest?” Jian Chen asked.

“While the items in here are quite extraordinary, nothing really caught my eye and was worth me taking.” Qin Wuming shook his head.

“That’s right, the decorations I put around back home would be better than the items in here by several amounts.” Qin Wujian spoke. As a Heaven Saint Master and general of the Eastern Deity Swords, money and items like this weren’t worth much in their eyes.

Ming Dong’s Space Ring had several items of considerable monetary cost. With a chuckle, he spoke, “I’m not as rich as you all, so I’ve put some stuff in my ring for now. If I am ever short on money, I will sell them.”

Hearing this, Jian Chen smiled, “Ming Dong, you are still afraid of being short on money despite your strength? If you ever lack money, go and kill several Class 5 Magical Beasts and sell the cores whenever.”

Rolling his eyes at Jian Chen, Ming Dong’s mouth twitched, “Do you really think a Class 5 Magical Beast is something an Earth Saint Master could easily kill, eh? Just going into the forest to find one would take forever.”

“If our friend Ming Dong would like, then he is always welcome to join our Eastern Deity Swords. He would at the very least be able to become a general with a hundred thousand soldiers under him and a salary guaranteed to fit his uses. Would you be interested?” Qin Wuming laughed as he spoke to Ming Dong. He had seen through Ming Dong’s hidden talent — not even thirty years old and he already a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master. With this talent, he wouldn’t even be fifty years old before he made the breakthrough to become a Heaven Saint Master; this was more than enough for people to wish to bring him in.



Ming Dong didn't hesitate to shake his head, "I'll be fine. I am a person that loves to spend his days traveling. Spending every day within your camps is something I am not suited for. Besides, I have already decided that I will travel with Jian Chen. Wherever he goes, I will go."

Qin Ji walked up to Ming Dong and held his shoulder, "I knew that brother Ming Dong would decline uncle's invitation. However, Ming Dong. We are brothers through good and bad, and brother Jian Chen is already the Imperial Protector of our Qinhuang Kingdom. We cannot have your own status too far down, so I have a proposal I wish for brother Ming Dong to agree to."

"What proposal? Say it. However, I can't guarantee that I'll agree to it." Ming Dong spoke unflinching.

Qin Ji patted Ming Dong on the shoulder with a laugh, "It's nothing major. I just hope that when brother Ming Dong makes the breakthrough to become a Heaven Saint Master, he will take up a position as an Imperial Advisor for our Qinhuang Kingdom. Naturally, we will not limit your movements. Instead, we will provide assistance whenever needed, just like we do with Jian Chen."

Ming Dong pondered the proposal for a moment, "No restriction on movement and even assistance is provided. It seems to me to have no shortcomings."

Seeing Ming Dong be swayed, Qin Ji hurriedly moved to strike while the iron was hot, “Of course there are no disadvantages. Our Qinhuang Kingdom is one of the Eight Great Powers with many vassal states nearby and an incomparable amount of power. Even among the Eight Great Powers, our Qinhuang Kingdom ranks among the highest. We have not been in any wars for several hundreds of years, so your time as an Imperial Advisor with us would be filled with leisure time. There is no need for you to do any work.”

Ming Dong went silent for a moment. Then, he finally agreed to Qin Ji’s request, “Fine then, seeing that we are brothers, I’ll agree to this. When I become a Heaven Saint Master, I will become an Imperial Advisor for your Qinhuang Kingdom.”

“Then that’s that!” Qin Ji laughed joyfully. With Ming Dong agreeing to become an Imperial Advisor, he was far too happy. It meant he would gain an additional hand and power when the time came for the succession for the throne.

“My dear friend Ming Dong, my Gesun Kingdom is also in need of Imperial Advisors. Might you consider this as well?” The king of the Gesun Kingdom suddenly spoke up.

Ming Dong knew that the king of the Gesun Kingdom was Jian Chen’s future father-in-law, so he was basically family as well. With that, Ming Dong gave a quick and concise agreement to him as well, “The Gesun Kingdom is the homelands to my brother, it is naturally my duty to protect the Gesun Kingdom to the best of my ability. Your Majesty, please wait for me to make the breakthrough to become a Heaven Saint Master before I become an Imperial

Advisor to the Gesun Kingdom. Otherwise, my strength as an Earth Saint Master wouldn't be enough to uphold the prestige of being an Imperial Advisor."

"Hahaha, no problem, there is no problem at all." The king laughed. He had planned long ago to bring Ming Dong into his graces, but because his starting relationship with him wasn't all that familiar, he had been afraid of being declined straight away. He had put it off, day after day, waiting for his sons to become friends with Ming Dong to foster a friendly friendship. Only after that had been accomplished would he send a formal invitation.

# Chapter 503: Dismantling The Heavenly Eagle Kingdom

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In the blink of an eye, Ming Dong had become an Imperial Advisor for both the Qinhuang and Gesun Kingdom. Although he wasn't officially one yet, it was just a matter of time before he was. In three years, he should be able to make the breakthrough to become a Heaven Saint Master and become one of the strongest individuals on the Tian Yuan Continent. At the same time, his change in identity would overturn the sky and earth around thanks to the huge change. That was because an Imperial Advisor for the Qinhuang Kingdom was a far greater luxury than being a Heaven Saint Master.

Ever since Ming Dong had followed Jian Chen to Mercenary City, he had made the figurative leap over the dragon's gate to become a magnificent dragon. If not for that one trip to Mercenary City, Ming Dong would never have been able to become a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master by the age of thirty or receive such treatment.

“Imperial Protector, all of the items have been placed within our Space Rings now.” One of the soldiers in charge of managing the items made his way to Jian Chen before respectfully handing over several Space Rings in his hand over to him.

Jian Chen took the Space Rings and then spoke to Qin Wuming and the king of the Gesun Kingdom, “We will have a share to this. Let us wait for it all to be converted into purple coins before splitting it.”

“There's no need!” Qin Wuming laughed, “Imperial Protector,

the items in here aren't worth any consideration over. Although they add up to a decent sum of money, it isn't something we would even glance at. The Gesun Kingdom and your family have more need for it than we do."

"Then that's that. These items will be taken by our Gesun Kingdom." Jian Chen wasn't one to argue. He knew that Qin Wuming truly felt the money was not worth his notice, but the Gesun Kingdom and Changyang clan were a different matter altogether. Neither of the two were as wealthy as the Qinhuang Kingdom. Several hundred thousand purple coins was not a small sum of wealth to them. Furthermore, if the Gesun Kingdom and Changyang clan wished to expand, the support of the Qinhuang Kingdom wouldn't be enough and they would need money to expand.

Afterward, everyone left the treasury. They stood by the giant gates where Jian Chen looked at the many times reinforced steel building. With a slight mumble, he said, "This treasury is quite considerable in price, why don't we take this as well."

Hearing this, the eyes of the king lit up. He had long since thought of the same idea, but he knew that he wouldn't be able to do it himself. Hearing Jian Chen bring up the topic of wanting to take the treasury building, he struck while the iron was hot, "My dear nephew has an excellent proposal. This treasury is something this king has been looking at. It is made from steel that was reinforced a hundred times over and has a thickness of five meters. Even a Heaven Saint Master would need to spend a considerable amount of time to break past it. With such a building, this king estimates it weighs about half a million kilograms, making it priceless. Even compared to that tungsten alloy door, the cost

wouldn't be that major.”

“Yes, with the steel being reinforced so many times, the price becomes rather considerable. Something like this shouldn't remain here, we should take it with us. We should have some soldiers come and cut the treasury apart into smaller pieces before putting it into our Space Rings for easy transport.” Ming Dong suggested.

Jian Chen hesitated for a moment before finally nodding his head, “Fine then, we'll have the best artisans in the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom come over and have them cut down the treasury. Remember, offer high prices.”

Hearing this, one of the quick-witted soldiers spoke up, “Honored Imperial Protector, this soldier will go make the arrangements.”

Jian Chen looked up at the sky, “It's already getting late, we've worked hard today. Why not take a rest and talk about the next step tomorrow?”

Afterward, everyone took up residency in the palace of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom while the soldiers made camp outside. All of the two hundred Earth Saint Masters from the Eastern Deity Swords kept a tight watch around the entire palace while even farther away, a patrol could be seen every three steps and a whistle every five. The residential palaces were under strict guard with the defenses under heavy lock and key.

That evening, the bright circular moon rose high into the night sky. Sprinkling down on the ground with moonlight, the darkness

on the earth was scattered while the stars filled the night sky. There were so many stars that it was useless to count as they blinked like children.

The night was extremely calm and the moon extremely beautiful. Within the palace of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom, it was even more quiet. If one were to stand at the very top, they would be able to see the entire palace and all of the men standing quietly here and there as if they were stone statues. From the moonlight sprinkling down on them, one would be able to barely see the twinkling silver armor they wore.

Within the palace, princess You Yue sat by herself at a stone table in a flower garden. Both hands were propped under her chin as her little head was tilted up toward the night sky in a daze. Her face had a stupefied look, making it hard to understand what she was thinking about.

“Princess You Yue, you’re still admiring the moon this late at night? Why haven’t you slept yet?” A voice called out from behind as Jian Chen somehow arrived right behind the princess with a smile.

Tonight, Jian Chen swapped out his robes for a black-colored one. Hidden by the shadows of the night, his entire person seemed to blend in with the darkness. If one wasn’t careful, they would ignore Jian Chen entirely.

Jian Chen’s voice came out of nowhere, causing the dazed princess to let out a cry in surprise and her body shook violently in fright.



Rising up from her stone seat, the princess turned around with some anger and pouted, “You can’t move about so silently behind someone’s back and scare them like that.”

Jian Chen laughed before cupping his hands together, “I apologize, I’ve let the princess become frightened.”

Hearing Jian Chen call her by her title, princess You Yue’s eyebrows furrowed together before complaining slightly, “Changyang Xiangtian, do you plan to continue on calling me princess?”

Jian Chen was taken back for a moment before quickly responding, “Then, I will call you You Yue from now on.”

Princess You Yue seemed pleased at Jian Chen’s answer, and with a faint smile, her beautiful eyes looked unflinchingly at Jian Chen’s handsome and stalwart face, “With it being so late, were you not able to sleep either?”

Jian Chen shook his head slightly before walking to the stone table in front of the princess and spoke, “I’m not accustomed to sleeping much anymore. I have a problem that’s causing me some difficulty even after trying to find a solution for half the day. That is why I’m here, to clear my mind.”

The princess sat back down and stared at Jian Chen with some indulgence, “What is causing you so much trouble? If it’s convenient, why not speak to me about it? Let me help you think.”

“It pertains to the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom.” Jian Chen summarized his thoughts before speaking, “Now that the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom is pretty much dealt with, all that remains are the terrible shambles of the kingdom. Right now I am thinking about just what needs to be done to these terrible shambles. If the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom loses its ruler and government, the entire kingdom will fall into anarchy. Several of the sects or families with power will most definitely take advantage of this to seize control of the territory, and at that moment, the entire Heavenly Eagle Kingdom would be sent ablaze with the flames of war. Even the innocent would be affected by this.”

The princess thought for a moment before responding, “Changyang Xiangtian, you speak correctly. Now that the Qinhuang Kingdom’s army has suppressed the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom, the other powers of the kingdom won’t dare to make any movements. But the very moment the Qinhuang Kingdom leaves, they will act without fear. There is an extremely huge chance that things will unfurl as you say, but resolving this issue isn’t too hard either.”

“What solution are you proposing?” Jian Chen asked.

“Did you never think about controlling the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom yourself?” The princess suggested.

Jian Chen shook his head, “I’ve thought of that before, but I found it an inappropriate action. Behind the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom is the Sect of Dragon and Tiger who are still watching. They themselves are strong and they don’t fear the Qinhuang Kingdom either. If we were to bring some men to control the

Heavenly Eagle Kingdom, we don't even need to talk about the innocent civilians of the kingdom, but instead the headache that the Sect of Dragon and Tiger would cause with their interference. Another reason is that the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom is too far away from our Gesun Kingdom. It wouldn't be convenient for a connection to be made. So controlling the kingdom wouldn't be that easy. After all, we are not as strong as the Qinhuang Kingdom."

"If that's the case, then we may as well disband the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom. Split up the territory of the kingdom before bestowing it to the more powerful clans and sects on the condition of them swearing an oath of loyalty to the Qinhuang Kingdom and become a vassal. This will simultaneously avoid any internal struggle and ward off any attempt of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger seizing control of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom." The princess You Yue was far more used to these matters than Jian Chen, so she was easily able to find a decent enough plan.

Jian Chen hummed as he thought about princess You Yue's plan. Finally, an excited smile gradually appeared on his face, "This plan isn't bad. Not only would the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom fade away, but it would also be given to the sects and families to control without fear of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger seizing the central control. This is killing three birds with one stone. Not bad, not bad at all. It appears our choice to take a stroll tonight was an incredibly wise choice."

Hearing Jian Chen's praise, the princess revealed a sweet smile on her face. Having been able to help Jian Chen, this was an incredibly happy affair to her.

“You Yue, it’s getting late. You should sleep first. Tomorrow morning I will begin to implement your plan. I believe that it will be a success.” Jian Chen smiled to You Yue.

“En!” The princess replied obediently as she rose from her stone stool and walked toward her own room. Having Jian Chen call her by You Yue instead of princess had already changed her. Her heart was overjoyed, and the previous sadness in it was cleared away instantly.

## Chapter 504: Seven Regions

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The next afternoon, Jian Chen sat on the golden throne in the middle of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom's palace. By his two sides were Qin Wuming, Qin Wujian, Khafir, Ye Ming, and several other Heaven Saint Masters. Down below, two rows of soldiers from the Eastern Deity Swords stood on standby; each one of them was an Earth Saint Master in strength.

At that moment, several Imperial Advisors from the Qinhuang Kingdom came in with the seven captive Heaven Saint Masters from the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom. Stopping in the center, the ten Imperial Advisors stood in a calm line behind the seven captives. Not a word was spoken, but each one of the seven captives felt a tremendous amount of pressure stifle their hearts.

Over twenty Heaven Saint Masters were congregated in this palace hall. Despite not a single word being spoken, the quietness of the palace made the atmosphere overwhelmingly oppressive.

Although the seven men from the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom were reduced to being prisoners, they were still ultimately Heaven Saint Masters. From their bones, a strong and proud power could be felt leaking out. Each one of them had their heads held high, and it was only when they looked at Jian Chen that a complicated look appeared on their faces.

From his talks with Hu Ba from the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, Jian Chen's identity had already been revealed for everyone to hear. The Heaven Saint Masters fortunate enough to survive all now understood Jian Chen's status, but it had still been very hard

for any one of them to believe that this was true and accept such a fact.

Calmly looking at the seven captives, Jian Chen didn't reveal any domineering aura from his body. He seemed like an ordinary person sitting there, and it was only after a moment that he finally broke the silence in the palace.

“Out of the fifteen Heaven Saint Masters of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom, only you seven are left.” Jian Chen's stated.

None of the seven Heaven Saint Masters said anything. The reason why they had surrendered in the first place was because they had no desire to throw away their lives in vain. After all, they had nothing to do with the anger that existed between the Gesun Kingdom and the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom. Because they were dragged into this, they were all afraid of saying something that may cause Jian Chen to grow angry and lose their life.

The Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom far surpassed whatever entity they could safely anger. He was like a gigantic mountain that they wouldn't even be able to blow wind on. It was only because of the support of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger that they had been brave enough to fight the Qinhuang Kingdom. With the Sect of Dragon and Tiger gone, there was absolutely no way that they would fight against the Qinhuang Kingdom now. All that would remain to them on that path was death.

Seeing that no one was talking, Jian Chen continued to speak, “Does everyone know why this one called you all here today?”

“Honored Imperial Protector, please explain!” One of the individuals respectfully cupped his hands together with an expression that revealed no dissatisfaction.

“The Heavenly Eagle Kingdom is currently occupied by us. I will speak the truth to you, the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom will not survive. The name needs to disappear from the Tian Yuan Continent. To prevent the Sect of Dragon and Tiger from taking control, we will dismantle the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom.” With this, Jian Chen stopped speaking for a second and awaited the responses from the seven.

Sure enough, each one of the seven Heaven Saint Masters blanched. Looking at each other, expressions of worry overcame their face, but no one dared to say anything.

“You seven, you each must belong to a different faction, I assume.” Jian Chen spoke.

The seven hesitated for a while before one of them finally spoke, “The honored Imperial Protector speaks correctly. We seven all belong to a different sect or clan.”

“Now then, have the seven of you decided what you will do in the future? Will you pick death? Or will you continue to live?” Jian Chen asked.

“We hope that the honored Imperial Protector will point to us the path of life.” One of the individuals spoke. To bow and scrape



their knees for a youth in his twenties was rather embarrassing, but when under a roof, one couldn't help but bow their head.

“Then, I will tell you my plan. I hope that everyone will find it fitting.” With that, Jian Chen took out a map from his Space Ring and gave it to the seven. “Now, I will split up the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom into seven regions for you seven to control. Each person will be responsible for their own region, and from here on out, there will be no such thing as the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom. There will only be the regions that you seven will have jurisdiction over.

Hearing this, the seven of them had looks of disbelief on their faces. Some were pleasantly surprised, some were confused, and some were doubtful. They all knew in their hearts that the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom covered a vast amount of territory. If it were to truly be split up into seven regions for them to control, then they would each find their own power and influence increased several times over. This to them, was an incredibly huge surprise.

Although they all belonged to clans or sects that could be considered to be the strongest of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom, the amount of territory they controlled wasn't exactly large. The fact that the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom had fifteen Heaven Saint Masters and because of the kingdom's meticulous planning, each family only had enough influence to cover about the size of a mountain, and it was incredibly hard to increase that influence. With Jian Chen's actions, it was as if he had delivered a free meat pie for them to eat and increase their power.

However, the seven individuals were old and experienced. They

knew that Jian Chen wouldn't so freely send them such a delicious treat. In an instant, they guessed Jian Chen's plan.

“Honored Imperial Protector, do you mean for us to swear our allegiances to you?” One of them asked.

Jian Chen laughed, “You are half-right. Correct, with such a great benefit, how could I just give this away to you for free, especially when you first tried to be enemies to the Qinhuang Kingdom?”

Jian Chen's later half of his speech caused the seven to blanch once more, but before they could say anything, Jian Chen continued, “I'll not mention what happened in the past for now. I'll say what I plan on doing. My request is rather simple. I wish for you seven to handle the work for the Qinhuang Kingdom and swear loyalty to the Qinhuang Kingdom to become external members of it. Would you agree to this request?”

Although Jian Chen wanted them to swear loyalty to himself, his current strength wasn't enough to make the Sect of Dragon and Tiger cower in fear. By tying these seven to the Qinhuang Kingdom, the Sect of Dragon and Tiger wouldn't act so rashly in case their plans backfired on them. Otherwise, he would be afraid of walking by himself and having the person behind the Sect of Dragon and Tiger interfere with the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom matter.

Plus, these seven swearing loyalty to the Qinhuang Kingdom or to Jian Chen wasn't too different. After all, his status as an Imperial Protector wasn't just for show. It was only that for the

Sect of Dragon and Tiger, the might of the Qinhuang Kingdom was far more prominent than an Imperial Protector at the strength of a Heaven Saint Master.

“Fine, I agree. From today henceforth, my Returning Cloud Sect will swear loyalty to the Qinhuang Kingdom and handle its affairs.”

“My Bucashana Clan agrees to swear loyalty to the Qinhuang Kingdom.”

“The Hilo Clan agrees to swear loyalty to the Qinhuang Kingdom.”

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This time, none of the seven members hesitated to respond. With a crisp response, their faces couldn't hide their excitement. Although they knew that Jian Chen wished to use this method to control the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom, it wasn't too important to them. The more important thing was that they had a robust pillar of support behind them. Furthermore, being connected to the Qinhuang Kingdom was something that many kingdoms wouldn't be able to get even if they tried.

# Chapter 505: An Injured Qin Wutian

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The reactions of the seven was within Jian Chen's calculations. After all, this was a good chance to curry favor with the Qinhuang Kingdom. Only an idiot would give up this once in a lifetime event.

"From now on, you seven are men of the Qinhuang Kingdom. I will leave this affair to you seven. If the Sect of Dragon and Tiger come to make trouble, they will be making an enemy of the Qinhuang Kingdom. The Qinhuang Kingdom will not sit idly on the sidelines for this." Jian Chen spoke.

"Yes!" The seven obeyed.

"You seven may leave now. I've already split this kingdom into seven equal territories for you all. When you get back, prepare to clean up whatever needs to be done. As for what needs to be done, I don't think that it's necessary for me to tell you what to do." Jian Chen smiled.

"We know what must be done, please rest assured Imperial Protector. We will not let you down for sure." The seven vowed.

After they had left, Jian Chen looked back to Qin Wuming, "General Qin Wuming, would doing this give the Qinhuang Kingdom any future troubles?"

Qin Wuming let out a small chuckle as he listened to Jian Chen. "Imperial Protector, you underestimate our Qinhuang Kingdom. Although the Sect of Dragon and Tiger is quite strong, the Saint

Ruler in their sect is the only one of importance. The rest of their individuals aren't even within the eyes of the Qinhuang Kingdom, and with the vastness of our lands, we have many subsidiary kingdoms which means we have many Heaven Saint Masters within our ranks. As for the Saint Ruler himself, he won't be too much of a problem unless he truly wishes to go against our four Imperial Protectors with his strength. Otherwise, the Saint Ruler won't decide to go against the Qinhuang Kingdom for such a small matter."

Qin Wuming's words let Jian Chen feel at ease. He had at first been worried that the Qinhuang Kingdom would be inconvenienced by this matter, but looking at it now, it appeared that he had put too much thought into it...

After a satisfactory conclusion was met, Jian Chen felt quite at ease with himself. Standing up from the throne, he spoke, "Everyone, let us split up, but not return back home just yet. Stay for two days or so, so the remaining powers of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom will cower in fear while the seven do their best to stabilize their territories."

After everyone left, the dissolution of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom made its way out of the imperial palace and left everyone that heard the news in shock. Soon, the news made its way to every single corner of the entire kingdom. In an instant, magical beasts capable of sending messages could be seen flying through the air in droves to reach any place the information might not have reached. Combined with this method of sending messages, within a day, practically everyone within the kingdom knew about the changes.

After the information was spread, all of the commoners of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom had different reactions than those with power. The commoners of the kingdom were all shocked for a good while, but they stabilized after some time and continued on with their lives as if everything was normal. As long as the commoners could continue to survive on the Tian Yuan Continent, it didn't matter if the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom existed or if the reign passed to someone else. This matter didn't concern them, so they left it at that. Naturally, there were several patriotic groups loyal to the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom that felt indignant at this. They voiced that the kingdom existed if the citizens existed, rather than the kingdom died with its king. They were discontent with how the Qinhuang Kingdom had done things, but because these thoughts only belonged to the minority, they stirred no large wave.

As for the various powers, they all made the same actions without exception. Each and every single one of them recalled all of their members and prepared themselves for expansion and war to fight and conquer territory. They knew that with the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom separated, this was a chance that was rare to come by. If they did not capitalize on this chance and prepare the horses and banners of war, once the other powers stabilized, there would be no chances left. This action was even taken up by the city rulers of several major cities. Some of the stronger cities had even established themselves as king of the mountain with attempts to annex the surrounding weaker cities nearby in hopes of establishing a new kingdom.

All in all, after news of the collapse of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom was spread, the equilibrium that was maintained in the kingdom was shattered. The entire kingdom was tense with anxiety, and although it had been relatively quiet for now, those with a keen mind and a sharp eye knew that this was only the calm

before the storm.

Afterward, it didn't take long for news of several factions erupting into war. However, another piece of information made its way around the kingdom, serving as a wake up call to every single inhabitant within these lands. It also extinguished the ravenous flames of desire in their hearts.

The Bucashana Clan, the Hilo Clan, Bloodmoon Mercenaries, Worldly Sect, Windfall Mountain, Earthfyre School, and the Double Mystery Sect all declared complete control and authority over the remaining parts of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom. At the same time, they declared their adherence and loyalty to the Qinhuang Kingdom.

With the surviving seven Heaven Saint Masters of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom all in their own respective factions, it was no exaggeration to say that these seven powers were fully deserving of being the seven strongest existences within the kingdom.

With the seven greatest powers stepping into this power struggle, the other families and clans didn't stand a chance. None of them had a Heaven Saint Master or the rapport of a kingdom as strong as the Qinhuang Kingdom. This meant the seven powers of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom possessed no chances of being defeated and would leave any opposing family without a single pocket of resistance.

This bit of information allowed the originally nervous Heavenly Eagle Kingdom to return to the previous calm from before. Everyone knew that while the kingdom itself had been dissolved,



the Qinhuang Kingdom had simply served to replace them as the ruling party, only stronger in terms of control. What could be ascertained was the fact that should the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom ever give rise to another Heaven Saint Master, that one would never be able to challenge the seven powers due to the Qinhuang Kingdom backing them up. As long as the Qinhuang Kingdom gave shelter, the seven powers would never lose their position.

The seven territories of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom were already territories that could not be disputed over. When the seven Heaven Saint Masters returned to their respective families, clans, and sects, they had immediately sprung into action and moved to claim their rightful territories.

And with the backing of the Qinhuang Kingdom, the acquisition of the territories had gone by smoothly. All of the lesser clans and sects had immediately pledged allegiance to these seven powers, and some of them had even become a subsidiary power to them. This had allowed for the seven powers to completely control the entire Heavenly Eagle Kingdom in three short days.

Among the seven, the group that profited the most was the Bloodmoon Mercenaries. They were able to use their one Heaven Saint Master to keep up the front while all of their Earth Saint Masters were among the next strongest within the kingdom. Thus, they were quickly introduced as one of the strongest powers of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom, but because they were at the bottom of the group, they were only able to claim a second class city as their stronghold with a small potential for growth before the war.

But now, Jian Chen's order had practically given the Bloodmoon

Mercenaries the power to grow to become the owners of one of the seven partitions. The amount of area they controlled had grown ten times over, giving no small excitement to the leader of the mercenaries.

It had been four days since the fragmentation of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom. In the original palace of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom, over a thousand artisans from the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom had already dismantled the treasury to a pile of scrap almost. There was no longer a third story, and the materials used to build that third story had been reduced to material that was later absorbed into the Space Rings of the Eastern Deity Swords.

Jian Chen gave all authority over to the seven powers to deal with any problems that may arise after the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom had been disbanded. This allowed him to a hands-free approach. All he did after that was quarter some soldiers around the area to act as a deterrence. The next few days were spent in leisure. All that was needed was for him to wait for the situation to stabilize before he and the army could return to the Gesun Kingdom.

At this moment, Jian Chen and princess You Yue were playing chess in the flower gardens in peace. Ever since You Yue had helped Jian Chen with the problem of what to do with the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom, the relationship between the two had grown far more intimate. Or at least, it was unlike the indifference from before.

Just then, Xiao Tian came walking in a hurry to Jian Chen with a serious expression and spoke, "Imperial Protector, something bad

has happened. After being sent out to the Sunset Kingdom to capture the second prince, Qin Wutian has come back. He's injured."

Startled, Jian Chen ignored his game of chess to look at Xiao Tian, "Just what happened out there!"

"Qin Wutian came across an attack and suffered serious injuries. The hundred elite soldiers accompanying him faced serious damage as well." Xiao Tian spoke grimly. His face was dark, this was an attack to the power that was the Qinhuang Kingdom.

Thinking for a moment, Jian Chen suddenly stood up before asking, "Where is Qin Wutian!"

"In the official hall!"

Bidding goodbye to the princess, Jian Chen hurriedly left the garden to rush to the official hall.

Just as Jian Chen arrived at the hall, all of the strongest people from the Qinhuang Kingdom had already congregated there. Each one of them had a dark expression filled with anger. On one of the chairs, a white-faced Qin Wutian sat weakly on it. His entire body was drenched with blood, and his silver armor had several cracks running through it. On his chest was a clear to see palm print.

# Chapter 506: Leaving For The Sect Of Dragon And Tiger

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Seeing the injured state Qin Wutian was in, Jian Chen's eyes flashed with a dangerous light, "Just what in the world happened for you to be in such a state?" He asked with a low voice.

"Imperial Protector, we followed your orders to go to the Sunset Kingdom to find the runaway prince. When we finally found and captured the prince, we ran into four of the individuals from the Sect of Dragon and Tiger on the road back. They injured us and rescued the second prince. Although none of my hundred soldiers were killed, practically everyone was heavily injured." Qin Wutian spoke weakly.

"How ridiculous is this? The Sect of Dragon and Tiger seemed to have eaten the guts of the leopard if they are willing to oppose our Qinhuang Kingdom."

"We cannot let matters stand like this. We must ensure that the Sect of Dragon and Tiger pays a heavy price in return."

"We absolutely cannot pardon them."

"The conduct of their sect is clearly meaning that they do not bother putting our Qinhuang Kingdom in their eye. This is a clear provocation of us."

Hearing this, several Imperial Advisors were furious beyond

belief. Their hair flew up like the mane of a furious lion — the actions of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger had enraged all of them.

“We will make sure that we repay them in kind. The palm of Heaven does not neglect anyone and would strike down anyone with their hand.” Qin Wuming was furious as well as he growled.

“Father speaks correctly. No matter who it was that hurt my elder brother, that hand will definitely move toward them.” Qin Wujian spoke dangerously, his eyes glinting with a dangerous killing intent.

Qin Wuming looked to Jian Chen, “Imperial Protector, please allow us to go to the Sect of Dragon and Tiger. This matter is important to the dignity of our Qinhuang Kingdom, we cannot let things stand like this.”

“Yes, Imperial Protector, this matter encroaches upon the dignity of our kingdom. Let alone the trifling Sect of Dragon and Tiger, even one of the other eight great powers would have to face justice if they committed such an act. The men of our Qinhuang Kingdom are not some easy target to bully.” One of the Imperial Advisors spoke virtuously.

“Everyone speaks correctly. This matter has to be responded to in kind. We cannot so easily pardon the Sect of Dragon and Tiger for this.” Jian Chen’s voice paused slightly as he turned to look at Qin Wutian. “Qin Wutian, you go and recover your strength first. I will send someone to the imperial city to bring all of the Radiant Saint Masters over.”

Qi Wutian nodded without a word before allowing himself to be led away by two other soldiers to rest.

After Qin Wutian had left, Jian Chen's eyes scoured over the others, "Let us all discuss our plan on dealing with the Sect of Dragon and Tiger. What ideas or plans might everyone have?"

"The Sect of Dragon and Tiger is actually willing to make an enemy out of us, for such a small and insignificant prince. It appears that they are so reliant on their backings that they no longer fear the Qinhuang Kingdom. Other than that, the second prince has some sort of particular status that is beyond our estimations of him being a simple prince." Cao Keqin speculated.

"Right. That line of thinking is not different from this old man's own. However, I believe that the Sect of Dragon and Tiger isn't actively working to have us as their enemy. They are working on the second prince's behalf. Otherwise, the hundred soldiers wouldn't have just been heavily injured. With four Heaven Saint Masters, killing them all wouldn't have been difficult at all." Another Imperial Advisor gave his input.

"No matter what goal they have, we should still pay them a visit to regain the face we have lost to them, and ensure no other faction undermines our Qinhuang Kingdom."

Jian Chen hummed for a moment, "How about this, we wait until Qin Wutian's injuries have fully healed before we set out and see just what attitude their sect has toward us."

“Yes, that’ll do. If need be, we can also have the other Imperial Protectors come spearhead this.” Qin Wutian spoke.

After that, everyone split up. Simultaneously, all of the Radiant Saint Masters within the imperial city of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom were gathered to heal Qin Wutian’s wounds. Radiant Saint Masters were extremely precious within the Tian Yuan Continent, meaning that they were sparse in numbers. Within such a large city like this one, there was roughly a dozen of them, and they were not particularly strong. The strongest was only at the Fourth Class, so with the scope of Qin Wutian’s injuries, it took two whole days for him to completely recover.

After he had left the halls, Jian Chen immediately walked toward the resting room where the king of the Gesun Kingdom was. Within, the Heaven Saint Masters Khafir and Ye Ming were both inside.

The four sat by the table for a moment before Jian Chen spoke, “There is a clash between us and the Sect of Dragon and Tiger. We are on the verge of walking toward their sect. Your Majesty, you and your army will return to the Gesun Kingdom tomorrow.”

“Changyang Xiangtian. Allow Ye Ming and I to accompany you to where the Sect of Dragon and Tiger is. Although our strength pales in comparison to the Imperial Advisors of the Qinhuang Kingdom, we are still of help.” Khafir spoke.

“That cannot do, headmaster. You and senior Ye Ming will both

have to return with the king. The ten Imperial Advisors and the three generals from the Qinhuang Kingdom will go with me to exact justice on the Sect of Dragon and Tiger. There cannot be an individual not at the Heaven Saint Master rank within our list.” Jian Chen didn’t hesitate to shoot down Khafir’s proposal. Although it would be difficult for the army of the Qinhuang Kingdom to come across danger, precautions had to be made, and Jian Chen had planned on having Ming Dong and the others to be sent back with the army since they offered the best security.

“Very well then. We will take charge of the well-being of the army then.” Khafir understood Jian Chen’s worries without another word to be said about the matter.

The king noticed the grim expression on Jian Chen’s face, guessing that the Sect of Dragon and Tiger had done something particularly repugnant. “My dear nephew, this matter with the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, how serious is it?”

“Your Majesty, please rest assured. The Sect of Dragon and Tiger is quite strong, but they cannot be compared to the Qinhuang Kingdom. This time they have offended the Qinhuang Kingdom’s honor, this is something the Qinhuang Kingdom won’t idly stand by for. If need be, I believe the Saint Ruler of the Qinhuang Kingdom will get involved as well.” Jian Chen spoke without worry. With the Origin Energy of the azure and violet Sword Spirits, Jian Chen didn’t fear any Heaven Saint Master. All he truly worried about was the Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger.

Upon hearing the words ‘Saint Ruler’, Khafir and Ye Jing both let out a startled gasp. A layer of strength that high was something



that was beyond their comprehension. Although a Saint Ruler was only one realm away from them, the distance between the two realms could never be made up, like a fly going against an elephant.

The Tian Yuan Continent had actually an ancient saying — under a Saint Ruler, all are ants.

“This is already something we cannot get involved in.” Ye Ming sighed.

“Ah!” Khafir sighed, “To think those years ago, the very first headmaster of Kargath Academy was a Saint Ruler. It is unfortunate he was a free-wanderer who loved to travel. I have no idea where he has gone, and it has already been hundreds of years since we last heard from him. If the headmaster were to continue watching over the Gesun Kingdom, then our kingdom would have soared a long time ago.”

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On the second morning, the army stationed in the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom had prepared themselves to leave. A million of the soldiers had already gathered outside of the city in a clearing. All they needed was the order and they would set out immediately.

“Jian Chen, you must be careful.” Ming Dong regarded Jian Chen. He knew that Jian Chen would be going with a group of people to deal with the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, but he was especially worried for him.

Jian Chen chuckled, “Why are you so grim? It is not like I won’t return, do not forget I represent the Qinhuang Kingdom, the Sect of Dragon and Tiger will not dare to act against me.”

At this time, You Yue took off one of the accessories she wore. Hesitating for a moment, she then personally handed it over to Jian Chen before speaking with a whisper, “Changyang Xiangtian, this is the Longevity Lock my mother gave to me. It can bring peace to a person, and now, I give it to you in hopes that you will be protected.” You Yue’s face had gone red, but she was still able to wrap the Longevity Lock around Jian Chen’s neck.

Jian Chen gave an embarrassed smile as he tucked the Longevity Lock on his neck behind his clothes. Feeling the warmth radiate from within the object, Jian Chen’s heart felt at peace.

“This Longevity Lock, I will treasure it for sure.” Jian Chen smiled gently to the princess as he pledged. This was the very first time he had been given something by a woman, and it was something to be worn very close as well.

“Xiang’er, finish your matter with the Sect of Dragon and Tiger and quickly come back. The restoration of the Changyang clan is nearly complete. You are an important figure to our clan, without you, the Changyang clan will be unable to continue with the ceremonies.” Changyang Ba spoke.

“I know, father. When my business with the Sect of Dragon and Tiger is done, I will return.” Jian Chen replied.

After bidding farewell to everyone, the Gesun Kingdom and the Qinhuang Kingdom's army departed. Aside from Jian Chen, the generals, and the Imperial Advisors of the Qinhuang Kingdom, all of the others followed the army of the Qinhuang Kingdom back to the Gesun Kingdom. All that was left were a hundred soldiers who would protect the treasury as the artisans continued to dismantle it.

Jian Chen watched the army leave before returning back to the imperial palace. However, the overly large palace was now empty without a single person to be seen, giving off the sense abandonment. Only the sounds of the tempered steel of the treasury could be heard being stripped from within, giving a small bit of life to the palace.

On the next day, Qin Wutian's injuries were fully recovered by the Radiant Saint Masters. Not willing to stay much longer, the group immediately set out for the Sect of Dragon and Tiger.

The Sect of Dragon and Tiger was situated on top of a large mountain relatively close to the Sunset Kingdom, but it was not a place where any country could define it as their own territory. The surrounding area wasn't under the jurisdiction of any kingdom and belonged solely to the Sect of Dragon and Tiger.

The Sect of Dragon and Tiger had existed for a thousand years at the very least, so their sect being located here was not a secret at all. Many people knew of this sect's existence, but only a small amount of individuals knew that the Sect of Dragon and Tiger had a Saint Ruler as their strongest force of power.

Although the Sect of Dragon and Tiger had existed for many years, they were very strict in their standards for accepting disciples. Thus, they did not have many of them — not even ten thousand of them. However, among these numbers, each and every single one of them were gifted individuals who would spend years under the tutelage of a Saint Ruler. Because of that, the Sect of Dragon and Tiger would produce one strong individual after another, leading to the sect's continuous rise in power instead of it weakening.

# Chapter 507: Might Of A Saint Ruler (One)

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There was a total of fourteen people with Jian Chen as they traveled day in and night out. Finally, they arrived at the giant mountain where the Sect of Dragon and Tiger was and descended down onto it.

“The leaders of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, come on out quickly now.” After setting down, the general of the Eastern Deity Swords, Qin Wuming immediately boomed. His voice traveled like the rumbling sounds of thunder throughout the mountains, echoing loudly through the world.

Perhaps knowing that the Qinhuang Kingdom would come to start trouble, the Sect of Dragon and Tiger had already made their preparations. As soon as Qin Wuming’s voice boomed out, a dozen individuals could be seen flying forth before stopping twenty meters away from those from the Qinhuang Kingdom.

There was a total of sixteen people from the Sect of Dragon and Tiger. Aside from the prior ten people who had been in the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom, there was still another six men that were new. From those six, there was a middle-aged couple, two middle-aged men, and another two elders who looked to be in their seventies.

“You all must be men from the Qinhuang Kingdom.” A purple-robed elder cupped his hands as he spoke to them with an expressionless face.

“Correct. We are from the Qinhuang Kingdom. Sect of Dragon and Tiger, not only did several of your members take away a criminal we captured, but you even injured my son. What is the meaning of this? Could it be that you wish for an open war to take place between you and the Qinhuang Kingdom?” Qin Wutian glared dangerously at the group of people from the Sect of Dragon and Tiger.

“Sect of Dragon and Tiger, you must offer us compensation for this affair. Otherwise, our Qinhuang Kingdom and your sect will cross blades instead.” Qin Wujian spoke in a low voice.

Hearing the two men speak, the purple-robed elder gave a faint smile, “If you two could please calm down. This one is the sectmaster of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger — Kris. Pertaining to the event that happened several days ago, I know of it, but it was nothing more than a misunderstanding.”

“Hmph, what kind of of bullshit understanding is it? Sect of Dragon and Tiger, do not think you can shirk your responsibilities. Our men have been injured by your sect. Speak then, how should this matter be absolved?” Qin Wujian spoke dangerously. Despite being in front of the mountain gates to the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, he was not in the slightest bit afraid of them since he had the forces of the Qinhuang Kingdom ready to support him from behind.

Qin Wutian stepped forward with a sinister glare directed toward the Sect of Dragon and Tiger. “There is still the second prince of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom. This man is someone our Imperial Protector wishes to capture. Yet, your men still dared to steal him

away. This is simply a clear example of not willing to work with our Qinhuang Kingdom.”

The sectmaster of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, Kris, did not grow angry. Instead, there was still a faint smile on his face, “Our sect truly did offend your Qinhuang Kingdom several days ago; therefore I, Kris, wish to apologize. However, this second prince has a special identity since his mother is a member of our Sect of Dragon and Tiger. So the second prince is considered to be a member of our sect and not an outsider. As such, we naturally cannot allow your Qinhuang Kingdom to take him away.” Kris spoke with a gentle voice, but the meaning within his words was loud and clear. As long as he or she was a member of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, the Qinhuang Kingdom would have no right to take him or her away. The second prince of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom included.

When the men from the Qinhuang Kingdom heard the implied meaning of what Kris had said, they all took on a rather hard look on their faces.

“Sectmaster Kris, what do you mean by your words?” This time, it was Xiao Tian who spoke with unbridled anger in his voice.

“Haha, this one doesn’t mean anything more. It is only that the second prince is of our sect. Our Sect of Dragon and Tiger will naturally protect him. This matter, I hope everyone will not be too forceful on. Although our Sect of Dragon and Tiger isn’t of the same level as your Qinhuang Kingdom, we are not that easy to bully either. This one offers an apologies for the injuries inflicted several days ago. Seeing that your Highness seems to have been

fully healed, his injuries must not have been too grievous, meaning that it was not a big matter either.” Kris spoke. Although his words were kind sounding, he did not place any of the Qinhuang Kingdom in his eye. He only spoke several words of apologies that seemed to try and even out the situation where Qin Wutian had been injured.

“Hmph, your Sect of Dragon and Tiger dreams quite grandiosely. How could the injuries of my brother be so trifling that it could be placated with words?” Qin Wujian spoke angrily.

“Then what might your Highness propose we should do?” Kris asked Qin Wujian.

Qin Wujian held up two fingers, “Two conditions. First, you will hand over the second prince. Second, whomever injured my brother, we want his arm cut off.”

Hearing this, the sectmaster Kris had a flash of coldness go through his eyes. The previously warm expression in his face had transformed into a sinister one as he suddenly spoke, “Absolutely not.” Kris was resolute on his decision and held no leeway for discussion.

Jian Chen snorted as he strode forth. Unyielding, he spoke, “Then this means to say that there is no way we can compromise over this. Since it is like so, allow us to give our masterstroke here.”

“Men of the Qinhuang Kingdom, your bullying ways are too



much. You truly do not give our Sect of Dragon and Tiger any options.” The middle-aged man next to Kris spoke angrily.

“What bullying? It was you that first gave us trouble. If you did not provoke us, then we would have eaten our fill and would have no quarrel to give with you.” Qing Xiaofan retorted.

“There is nothing more that needs to be said about this. Then please allow our Sect of Dragon and Tiger to see the masterstroke of the Qinhuang Kingdom.” The other middle-aged man growled before drawing out his Saint Weapon to charge at one of the Imperial Advisors.

Following the actions of the middle-aged men, the other individual of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger immediately sprung into action as well. Both sides joined the fray, and in some time, practically thirty Heaven Saint Masters were fighting right in front of the gates to the Sect of Dragon and Tiger. Huge waves of energy continued to burst wave after wave from both sides and destroy the surrounding area in the blink of an eye. The battle of the thirty Heaven Saint Masters was so strong that several of the surrounding giant trees were reduced to splinters and the ground was littered with craters.

As soon as the battle first started, a transparent barrier wordlessly appeared over the gates to the Sect of Dragon and Tiger. It enveloped the entirety of the sect inside and prevented it from being targeted. This barrier seemed weak, but with the battle residue of thirty Heaven Saint Masters flying about, the barrier hadn’t even wavered a bit.

Inside the sect, several thousand disciples had been alarmed by the battle taking place outside. Standing one by one on the higher points of the place, they stared at the faraway but spectacular battle. With the barrier protecting them, they weren't in the least bit afraid of being hit by a shockwave from the battle.

Fighting up in the sky, Jian Chen himself fought against three men. Fighting him was the sectmaster of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, Kris, the vice sectmaster, Hu Ba, and a seventy year old man. Each one of them were extremely strong, Hu Ba and the elder were both at the Fifth Cycle Heaven Saint Master strength, and Kris was a Sixth Cycle Heaven Saint Master. He had already reached the peak of the Heaven Saint Masters and thus had a battle strength that was astounding.

With him fighting against three people, Jian Chen had decided to take it seriously. From the get go, he had used the Origin energy of the Sword Spirits which was the thing he relied on the most.

These three had taken the initiative to attack Jian Chen. Hu Ba had clearly told the others of Jian Chen's identity, warning both Kris and the other elder of the dangers of the Origin energy. For that reason, they didn't dare to fight Jian Chen directly. Instead they had two people distract him while the third would find an opportunity to strike at Jian Chen from behind.

## Chapter 508: Might Of A Saint Ruler (Two)

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The sky flashed with a violet light as Jian Chen maneuvered the azure and violet rays of light around his body. Because Jian Chen was moving far too fast, the Origin energy of the azure and violet Sword Spirits turned into a curtain of light that covered his body.

Although Jian Chen had lost his Saint Force, which resulted in him becoming several times slower than before, his muscles had been reinforced by the three wisps of Chaotic Force, strengthening his body. Even without the Saint Force supporting him, the power of his body had already boosted his speed to a considerable level.

Despite Kris, Hu Ba, and the third trying to defeat Jian Chen, they knew that they could not even touch the strange energy that Jian Chen held in his hand. Their Saint Weapons never dared to cross blades, so the three of them felt that they had an arm and a leg tied behind their backs. They couldn't fight to their best ability, and felt extremely sullen because of that.

But what really made them want to spit blood out was that no matter where they slashed at Jian Chen with their Saint Weapons, the Origin energy would come from every direction possible at the most critical moment to stop their attacks. It traveled without fear toward their Saint Weapons and forced them to abandon their attacks to evade it. Otherwise, they would be forced to take an unbearable amount of damage.

Seeing that all three of them were completely helpless in dealing with Jian Chen, the three of them felt extremely furious. Immediately, the sectmaster and the elder of the Sect of Dragon

and Tiger let out a roar and simultaneously used their Battle Skills against Jian Chen.

The two Saint Weapons shined with an eye-stabbing amount of light and streaked through the sky with the speed of lightning. With their attacks came a pressure that seemed like it could squash the world.

Sensing the pressure press against his body, Jian Chen's lips curled into a sneer and spoke coldly, "You think a mere Earth Tier Battle Skill could injure me?!"

Whoosh! Whoosh!

As he spoke, Jian Chen let loose two stabs of his sword toward the two battle skills. Two simultaneous explosions could be heard as the energy from the Earth Tier Battle Skills exploded on contact. A storm of dust then concealed the figures of all four combatants.

Jian Chen's entire body began to glow with a dazzling light. At a thought, he began to bring the element of wind around his body and envelop himself within it, bringing about a squall of wind.

With a flash of azure light, the gradual pick up of the wind element carried Jian Chen's body forward. In the blink of an eye, he had arrived right in front of Kris; with a brandish of his right hand, the Origin energy in his began to lash out in a series of intricate sword slashes toward Kris.

Kris' face blanched, and he immediately retreated backward to avoid going against Jian Chen.

Right now, the other two fighters of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger had been blown ten meters away because of the fierce explosion. They wouldn't be able to get to Kris in time. Jian Chen knew this was an excellent time to pick them off one by one, so there was no way he would lose this chance. Immediately charging ahead, he chased after Kris without abandon.

Although Kris was a Sixth Cycle Heaven Saint Master, he was not of the wind element so his speed would not even be close to comparable with Jian Chen's. The distance between the two of them was quickly closed. In the blink of an eye, Jian Chen caught up to him. The entire sky was filled with the azure and violet light as it burst out from every part of Jian Chen's body, leaving no escape for Kris.

"Then allow me, Kris, to experience just how dangerous this mysterious power, Hu Ba said, is." Kris' eyes flashed dangerously. Without stepping back, he brought his sword down to stab at Jian Chen with all his might.

Kris' giant sword stabbed toward the spot in front of him with an irresistible force and without any bit of resistance. As his giant sword came close to Jian Chen's chest, there was a crisp sound of contact that occurred afterward.

"Ding!"

The Origin energy of the Sword Spirits made contact with Kris' Saint Weapon with the unfathomable sound of metal hitting metal. The Origin energy had been fully condensed, and although it was not the same type of substance as a Saint Weapon, it was already as durable as steel.

A moment after the sound rang out, Kris' face suddenly blanched before a mouthful of blood came spitting out from his lips.

Although Kris was a Sixth Cycle Heaven Saint Master, the Saint Weapon was still intrinsically connected to its owner. If the Saint Weapon was hurt, then, no matter how strong the owner was, they would gain a proportional amount of damage. Even a Saint Ruler would be no exception.

“This power is indeed terrifying. Hu Ba was correct, we cannot go head to head against him.” Kris exclaimed to himself in astonishment. After personally witnessing the terrifying power of the Origin energy, he now knew just how amazing it was.

As that line of thought ran across Kris' mind, Jian Chen brought two more sword slashes down onto Kris' Saint Weapon before he could bring it back.

Kris' body began to tremble violently as another two or three spurts of blood came flying out. His face became deathly pale as three new chips appeared on his sword, bringing his body to an even more injured state.

“Sectmaster!”

“Be careful sectmaster!”

Seeing Kris injured, Hu Ba and the other elder had let out identical cries of astonishment. Immediately flying forward with all their might, they tried to do their best to distract Jian Chen so that Kris would not be further injured or killed.

A damaged Saint Weapon would cause a grave amount of damage to the body. Kris' fighting ability had already been diminished to the point of being no concern. Since Jian Chen wasn't after Kris' life, he simply stopped fighting him. He changed his targets to Hu Ba and the other Fifth Cycle Heaven Saint Master and did his best to fight against them.

The pressure on Jian Chen had noticeably decreased with one Sixth Cycle Heaven Saint Master short in the battle. He was able to unleash an endless amount of refined sword moves one after another by using the Origin energy as his sword. With his attainments in the path of the sword, he quickly inflicted serious damage on both Hu Ba and the other, causing them both to spit out blood.

“Damn it all, what power is that for it to be so strong?” Hu Ba cursed while wiping the blood away from his mouth. The Origin energy of the Sword Spirits made him so afraid to act because of the thought of hurting himself. Despite the power in his body, he was completely unable and afraid of using it, which made him very sullen.

Just at that moment, a tremendous amount of energy suddenly filled the air. In that instant, the clouds in the skies had begun to swirl and the wind had transformed into a hissing gale that pierced the ears. Above everyone's heads, a black cloud had started to quickly form and blot out the surrounding sunlight and drain color away from the area.

“Heaven Tier Battle Skill!” Jian Chen exclaimed in realization. Turning his head to look in a certain direction, he could see Qin Wuming, Qin Wutian, and Qin Wujian all releasing their Heaven Tier Battle Skills at the same time. The three battle skills were identical, so when they used them all at the same time, there was a sort of resonance between the three. They harmonized and made the power of the Heaven Tier Battle Skill skyrocket.

“Don't think that you alone hold the monopoly on Heaven Tier Battle Skills. Our Sect of Dragon and Tiger are in no shortage of them either.” An individual roared before a tremendous amount of power shot out from him as he used his own Heaven Tier Battle Skill.

After this announcement, three other members from the Sect of Dragon and Tiger used their own Heaven Tier Battle Skills. Although the effect of their battle skills didn't achieve the same level of effect as the three generals, there was an advantage in numbers which brought the overall power to a tie.

Seeing this sight, Kris suddenly blanched before crying out, “No! Stop!”

Seven Heaven Tier Battle Skills would bring about a tremendous



amount of energy whiplash and could destroy the mountain quite easily. This was where the Sect of Dragon and Tiger lived, and while there was a barrier that could protect them from any danger, the mountain would not be shielded. In the case that the mountain was destroyed, then the foundations of the sect would be gone, and the aftermath of such a thing was not something sectmaster Kris had wanted.

Unfortunately because of the prior events, both sides had already been brought to a boiling point where they could not even think of the repercussions. Despite Kris opening his mouth in warning, he was far too late.

Jian Chen grew grim as well. Immediately retreating several kilometers, his mind moved into action and brought the earth element in the world toward him before ultimately wrapping it around his body to form a yellow armor. Against seven Heaven Tier Battle Skills, the amount of power that would result from them was many times stronger than a single Heaven Tier Battle Skill. Jian Chen had to be as careful as he could. While the armor of the earth element would be like paper in front of a Heaven Saint Master, it could at least protect his clothes and prevent him from getting into a difficult situation. This would also give Jian Chen a shallow level of defense since he didn't have Saint Force protecting him like the others.

At this moment, the ten fighters from the Qinhuang Kingdom and the remaining members of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger had ceased their fighting to get as far away from the five as they could. Their Saint Force had already bubbled out and formed a protective layering around them in preparation to withstand the aftermath from the seven Heaven Tier Battle Skills.

Just as everyone was preparing their defenses, the seven battle skills had finally finished their own preparations. Following a furious roar, all seven unleashed them at the same time. A strong energy ripped apart the space between them, creating several tiny cracks throughout it. Ten meters within these cracks, the space began to swirl and surge about.

In that instant, the seven battle skills clashed together. But it was what happened afterwards that had caused everyone to widen their eyes in shock and disbelief.

Just when the seven battle skills clashed, there wasn't even a single bit of sound afterward. Not a bit of energy could be seen washing over the area, and the energy that had wrapped around the seven Saint Weapons had disappeared without a trace. At this show, everyone was completely stunned.

“A barrier, a barrier is blocking them!” A voice cried out. Hearing this, everyone's eyes immediately locked onto a spot in between the seven people. Sure enough, there was a barrier that had appeared out of nowhere. It divided the Heaven Saint Masters from the Qinhuang Kingdom and the Sect of Dragon and Tiger. But not only that, the Saint Weapons from the seven had been taken away as well.

At this sight everyone — Jian Chen included — let out a gasp in shock. Not a single one of them needed to think to know that the Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger had finally put his hand into this battle.

However, what they didn't think of was that the Saint Ruler would be strong enough to stop seven Heaven Tier Battle Skills by a barrier without a problem or letting any energy escape.

“Is that the might of a Saint Ruler?” Jian Chen's thoughts were in turmoil. In the past he conjectured about their strength many times over. Although he could admit that they were all an existence of unbelievable strength, he would never have imagined that their strength would be at such a terrifying level like this.

Under a Saint Ruler, all are ants. This saying was indeed not a false one.

# Chapter 509: Might Of A Saint Ruler (Three)

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“It’s the elder sectmaster! He has come!” Seeing the barrier that obstructed the people there, the sectmaster Kris felt a surge of emotions flash over his face, forcing him to cry out in astonishment.

The hidden Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger had finally come out, causing the fighters from the sect to have a look of joy appear on their faces. The disaster that had nearly befallen them had been avoided at last. Seven Heaven Tier Battle Skills would have caused the entire mountain range to collapse which would destroy the foundations of the sect that had been protected from being destroyed by a barrier. Although this wouldn’t kill many disciples of the sect, the destruction of the sect itself would be an extreme sign of humiliation.

“The elder sectmaster is far too strong. Even without showing himself, he has managed to put down a barrier right in front of seven Heaven Tier Battle Skills. Is this the true extent of a Saint Ruler’s strength? There is truly a tremendous gap between a Heaven Saint Master and a Saint Ruler.” With a pale face, the heavily injured Hu Ba muttered to himself in a daze as he looked at the barrier. The elder sectmaster of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger spent all of his time hidden in the mountains cultivating and never appeared in front of anyone. Although many people knew that there was a Saint Ruler in the sect, no one had seen him for hundreds of years, nor had the Saint Ruler ever personally taken part of a battle.

The spectacle in front of him was a first for Hu Ba. From childhood to now, this was the very first time he had seen the

hermit Saint Ruler taking action.

Seeing their elder sectmaster caused all of the individuals from the Sect of Dragon and Tiger to be overjoyed. To them, as long as the elder sectmaster came forward, then even the most problematic of problems would be neutralized. After all, a Saint Ruler was something even the Qinhuang Kingdom would have to take seriously.

On the other side, the ten members from the Qinhuang Kingdom and the three generals all displayed extremely grim expressions on their faces. There was no surprise however. They had expected the Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger to make an appearance.

“Disciples of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, stand back!” Just at that moment, an elderly voice echoed across the sky. It was unknown just where this voice had come from, but it sounded calm despite the booming volume and echo.

“Yes, elder sectmaster!” The Heaven Saint Masters of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger flew toward the interior of their sect as obediently as a baby.

“Kris, Hu Ba, and Mospen. You three stay here.” The elder sectmaster’s voice could be heard once more as he called out for those three individuals.

Hearing this, the three that had been called were stunned. Their feet immediately halted as they stood in place without another sound. Not even a question was asked.

The vice sect leader Hu Ba had been extremely moved. He had not thought that the elder sectmaster would unexpectedly know his name. To him, the elder sectmaster knowing his name was an extremely glorious honor.

Everyone from the Qinhuang Kingdom stood still without a sound. Against a Saint Ruler, they all felt as if their movements and actions were limited. It was no longer as easy as it was when they were fighting against the Heaven Saint Masters.

When Jian Chen personally saw that the three people he had been fighting with were told to remain, his heart began to drop. He was already realizing that the situation was taking a turn for the worst.

These three men that had been told to stay behind were the ones who had their Saint Weapons chipped by the Origin energy and were heavily injured. If the Saint Ruler had told them to remain behind, could he plan to support them?

Quickly, the ten individuals from the Sect of Dragon and Tiger retreated into the sect. They were behind the barrier of the sect where they could continue observing. At this moment, the Saint Ruler's voice could be heard once more, "Men from the Qinhuang Kingdom. In spite of everything, you've decided to take action against my Sect of Dragon and Tiger. Did you take my sect to be that easy to bully?" As he spoke, the kindly voice he has used before transformed to gain a hint of steel.

“Senior of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, this business was started because of your sect. If we were to ignore the matter with the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom, there is still the matter that happened several days ago. Our orders were to arrest a criminal from the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom and escort him back to us, but along the way, the individuals from your Sect of Dragon and Tiger ambushed us. Not only was the criminal rescued away from our Qinhuang Kingdom, your people also inflicted serious injuries upon my son. I would like to invite senior to come speak to us about this.” Qin Wuming spoke righteously.

“Nonsense. What criminal of the Qinhuang Kingdom? The second prince of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom is one with our Sect of Dragon and Tiger. How could he be sent away like a criminal to your esteemed Qinhuang Kingdom? The Heavenly Eagle Kingdom had already been given to our sect to govern and became our territory to uphold. Likewise, if we were to ignore that your Qinhuang Kingdom were trying to seize the territory of ours, you still wish to capture one of our own men. What reason is there for that?” The vice sect leader Hu Ba roared.

Xiao Tian sneered. “Since when did the second prince of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom become one of yours. According to what we know, the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom has nothing to do with the Sect of Dragon and Tiger.”

“Correct, Karlow is the second prince of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom, but his mother is the great-granddaughter of the sectmaster, Kris. Thus, Karlow is considered to be a direct descendant of our Sect of Dragon and Tiger. He is no outsider. As for the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom, the king of the kingdom had decided to give it to our Sect of Dragon and Tiger for a long time

ago, making that territory ours.” This time it was Mospen that spoke. Despite his heavy injuries, his voice was still as exuberant as ever.

Soon, the two sides descended into an argumentative clamor before the Saint Ruler finally spoke, “Enough, no more squabbling!”

At a word, both the Sect of Dragon and Tiger and the Qinhuang Kingdom obediently closed their mouths. They dared to speak reason to the Saint Ruler, but not to go against him.

The Saint Ruler began to speak, “The second prince of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom is a member of our Sect of Dragon and Tiger. For such a small reason, we cannot hand him over to your Qinhuang Kingdom. Men from the Qinhuang Kingdom, you have squabbled, and you have fought. This business ends here. To make amends for the injuries inflicted upon you by our Sect of Dragon and Tiger, we shall offer you the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom. Now, you may all leave.”

Hearing this, everyone from the Qinhuang Kingdom revealed ugly looks on their faces. While the Saint Ruler’s words could be considered to sound kind, his way of doing things was hegemonic in nature. Not only was he protecting the second prince, he was also shifting the responsibilities of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger completely. The Heavenly Eagle Kingdom was already considered part of the Qinhuang Kingdom, so gifting it or not made no difference. Unless, the Sect of Dragon and Tiger was willing to fight the Qinhuang Kingdom for territory?



The still hidden Saint Ruler spoke again after that, “Now that the business between the Qinhuang Kingdom and the Sect of Dragon and Tiger is settled, there is still the problem of what happened to Kris and the other two. Their Saint Weapons were damaged, and although it can be healed, their vital energy has been injured as well. The youngster who damaged them three, it is time you offer your compensate to my Sect of Dragon and Tiger.”

Jian Chen growled furiously, “I had no idea that senior would deal in such a manner like this.”

The men from the Qinhuang Kingdom all blanched. Jian Chen was the Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom, but he had injured the three experts from the Sect of Dragon and Tiger. To demand that the grand Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom give compensation, was simply a slap in the face to the Qinhuang Kingdom.

“Hmph. A mere Heaven Saint Master dares speak back to me.” Unknowingly, the hidden Saint Ruler suddenly grew furious. At his words, a transparent barrier suddenly appeared around Jian Chen’s body, trapping him inside like a prisoner. This barrier was personally created by a Saint Ruler and was far stronger than the barriers Jian Chen had seen used by the influential clan members back in the Gathering of the Mercenaries in Mercenary City. Even if a Heaven Saint Master were to use a Heaven Tier Battle Skill, it wouldn’t be able to break apart this seemingly weak barrier.

Seeing that Jian Chen had been trapped by the Saint Ruler, everyone from the Qinhuang Kingdom grew indignant. Xiao Tian himself immediately shouted, “Senior, what is the meaning of

this? Could it be that you wish to make our Qinhuang Kingdom an enemy?”

“Your Sect of Dragon and Tiger is too savage, do you wish to start a war?”

Everyone from the Qinhuang Kingdom felt indignant at this injustice. Each one of them was extremely angry at the Saint Ruler’s conduct. If not for the fact that they were up against a Saint Ruler, they would have leaped into action a long time ago.

Jian Chen was angry as well. Although he was extremely afraid of the strength of a Saint Ruler, he was not such a man that would bow and scrape his head when bullied. Using the Origin energy of the Sword Spirits, he began to stab at the barrier without any hesitation.

Jian Chen wasn’t certain if the Origin energy would be enough to break through the barrier that a Saint Ruler had personally put down, but now was fortunately a good time test it out.

“Bo!”

Just as the Origin energy stabbed into the barrier, there was a light sound as the barrier surrounding Jian Chen completely shattered. The barrier that had been strong enough to withstand seven Heaven Tier Battle Skills seemed like a balloon popped with a needle in front of Jian Chen.

At this sight, everyone from both the Qinhuang Kingdom and the Sect of Dragon and Tiger had been shocked into silence. Each one of them had a look of sheer disbelief on their faces.

“Eh?!” The still hidden Saint Ruler had let out a surprised cry. He was clearly astonished that Jian Chen was able to pierce through the barrier he had put down.

The entire place was quiet for some time before the Saint Ruler finally spoke once more. “Youngster, what power is that you have. Tell me how you obtained such a power and this old man will let you go.” The Origin energy of the azure and violet Sword Spirits caused even the Saint Ruler to covet it.

“Don’t think that I would tell you!” Jian Chen replied without hesitation.

“You seek death!” The Saint Ruler was furious. The entire horizon seemed to surge with energy as a tremendous amount of pressure came forth from the Sect of Dragon and Tiger toward Jian Chen.

Seeing that the Saint Ruler was about to make a move, Xiao Tian’s face drained of color before hurriedly shouting, “Halt! That is the Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom. Do you think that you could act toward an Imperial Protector with success?”

The pressure in the sky quickly disappeared and the surge of energy on the horizon just as quickly calmed down as well. Xiao Tian’s words had stopped the Saint Ruler from doing anything to

Jian Chen. An Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom was in particularly quite special. The Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger himself could not just injure one without reason. In the case that he did, then all pretense of cordiality between the Qinhuang Kingdom and the Sect of Dragon and Tiger would be dropped and the Qinhuang Kingdom would immediately march for them in open war.

“This youth is the Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom?” The Saint Ruler asked, clearly not believing Jian Chen’s identity.

“Correct. Jian Chen is indeed the Imperial Protector of our Qinhuang Kingdom. His status is equivalent to the four honored Imperial Protectors of our Qinhuang Kingdom of the past.” Qing Xiaofan spoke, clearly describing just how sublime Jian Chen’s status was in the Qinhuang Kingdom.

This time, the Saint Ruler remained quiet for a very long time. Although Jian Chen was just a Heaven Saint Master, the fact that he was the Imperial Protector made the Saint Ruler afraid of the consequences. He knew in his heart that if he did not treat this matter with care, then the four Saint Rulers of the Qinhuang Kingdom would come themselves.

“You may go now!” The Saint Ruler’s voice boomed half a moment later.

Hearing this, the dark-faced Jian Chen and the others from the Qinhuang Kingdom gave each other a stare. With a faint nod, they left the area promptly. Everyone knew that with the Saint Ruler

stepping out, it would make no sense for them to remain here any longer. It would be best to first leave and discuss things for the future.

Just as everyone rose into the air, the horizons boomed with the voice of the Saint Ruler once more. “Although you are an Imperial Protector, you have offended this old man nonetheless. If I do not teach you a lesson here, then there will be others who will take me to be an easy target to bully.” The space behind Jian Chen’s body suddenly began to surge and twist violently within itself. A tremendous amount of energy came spiraling out from the space and slammed ruthlessly into Jian Chen’s back.

# Chapter 510: Heavy Damages

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Just as everyone rose into the air, the horizons boomed with the voice of the Saint Ruler once more. “Although you are an Imperial Protector, you have offended this old man nonetheless. If I do not teach you a lesson here, then there will be others who will take me to be an easy target to bully.” The space behind Jian Chen’s body suddenly began to surge and twist violently within itself. A tremendous amount of energy came spiraling out from the space and slammed ruthlessly into Jian Chen’s back

Although Jian Chen had felt something coming toward his back, he was not able to do anything to dodge because the space around him had frozen for a moment. His body was stuck rigidly in place and was powerless to move in any direction.

“Pfff!” Feeling an extremely large amount of energy slam into his back, Jian Chen spat out a large mouthful of blood and grew extremely pale in the face. The space that had frozen around him disappeared and returned to normal. Jian Chen’s body flew forward like a bullet from the impact. Five hundred meters away he crashed into a nearby mountain peak. The entire area shattered, leaving Jian Chen in a hole for him to sink into.

Experiencing this fierce impact, the entire mountain shook for a moment and emphasized just how strong of blow it had been.

“Imperial Protector!” The ten Imperial Advisors and the three generals from the Qinhuang Kingdom cried out before flying toward that mountain. It was Xiao Tian that went to where Jian Chen had fallen and supported him back up from the hole.

At this moment, Jian Chen's entire body hung on Xiao Tian's. Even standing was not a simple task for him at the time. His face was as pale as paper without any blood, and streams of blood had poured out from his mouth without stopping. The top part of his clothes had disappeared as if vaporized by the explosion. Not even a strip of cloth could be seen, leaving the entire part of his body bare.

The injured part of Jian Chen's back was a mangled mess without any unbroken skin left to be seen. It was a dreadful wound that had ripped at his internal organs. Even his bones and blood vessels had been split.

The strike of a Saint Ruler was capable of tearing apart space. Even if Jian Chen's body was tempered with the Chaotic Force, it would be the same as tofu in front of the Saint Ruler.

"Imperial Protector, are you okay? Take this Radiant Spirit Pill." Qin Wuming immediately took out a Radiant Spirit Pill from his Space Ring and administered it to Jian Chen in concern.

Although a Radiant Spirit Pill was by far not enough to heal Jian Chen's wounds, it would at least temporarily stabilize his wounds and prevent them from getting any worse.

Jian Chen gave several harsh coughs while spitting out several particles of parts from his body out from his mouth. Not only was the ground dyed red with blood, it had several bits of the ruptured parts of his internal organs.

Jian Chen slowly opened his eyes to look at Xiao Tian who was supporting him. Powerlessly, he sat down on a giant boulder and gasped for air. His entire body was devoid of strength for the time being because of the serious injuries. If his throat were to have something clogged in it, he would be powerless to say a word.

Seeing that Jian Chen had been seriously injured by the Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, everyone from the Qinhuang Kingdom grew extremely dark in the face. A chilling glare could be seen as a fierce killing intent radiated from their eyes.

Although they and Jian Chen had not yet reached an extremely personal level, Jian Chen was an Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom. He represented the face of the Qinhuang Kingdom. For the Saint Ruler to inflict such a wound onto him, this was akin to having him ruthlessly slap the Qinhuang Kingdom in the face without any regards.

“The Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger is far too unruly. This business can absolutely not be let go like this.” Qin Wutian snarled, fury emerging from his body.

“We will ensure that the Sect of Dragon and Tiger will pay a price for this. Let us return to the Qinhuang Kingdom to report this to the esteemed four Imperial Protectors. This concerns the face of our Qinhuang Kingdom and the millennia worth of reputation we have built up. Our Imperial Protectors will not sit idly for this.” Qing Shaofan spoke.



“Indeed. We must have the Imperial Protectors come on over. If we do not take back the prestige we lost, then our Qinhuang Kingdom will have none left to remain on the Tian Yuan Continent, let alone remain as one of the strongest eight.” Qin Wujian growled. Although the Sect of Dragon and Tiger was very far away, everyone was extremely angry. None of them were afraid that the Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger would hear them.

Qin Wuming spoke, “We should leave this area first and discuss our next course of action on the road.”

“Yes, let’s leave this place first. The wounds of the Imperial Protector are very heavy. He can’t even rush down the roads, we must carry him.” Xiao Tian spoke.

Shortly afterward, Xiao Tian held up the injured Jian Chen and had the energy of the world surround him as they brought him into the air. As everyone was worried about the Saint Ruler attacking again, they surrounded him as they left. They all knew that Jian Chen was an extremely important figure to the Qinhuang Kingdom. This was a future Saint Ruler, so his well being was extremely crucial.

Two days later, everyone finally returned to the imperial palace of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom. Although they had left days ago, the imperial palace was still extremely quiet. Only the sounds of the artisans working on the treasury could be heard. Without the express approval from the Qinhuang Kingdom, no person or power would dare enter the imperial palace.

Within the imperial palace, Xiao Tian escorted Jian Chen into a room to rest. Jian Chen lay powerlessly on the bed and the rest of the individuals from the Qinhuang Kingdom stood on the other side with a grave expression.

“I will be using a secret art to heal myself, please see yourself out. Do not disturb me while I am healing myself.” Jian Chen spoke weakly.

All thirteen of the Heaven Saint Masters bowed out from the room to allow Jian Chen to rest by himself in the secluded room.

Withdrawing from Jian Chen’s room, the thirteen Heaven Saint Masters all sat down in front of a circular table. Solemn in thought, Qin Wuming suddenly spoke out, “Qing Shaofan, you’re a wind-attributed cultivator and faster than the rest of us. Head on back to the Qinhuang Kingdom and report to the Imperial Protectors what happened. No matter what, we must get back the honor we have lost.”

“No problem. Since there’s no time to lose, I’ll leave right away!” With that, Qing Shaofan stood up to leave.

“Hold on!” Qin Wuming took out a map from his Space Ring to give to Qing Shaofan. “The closest kingdom with a Space Gate near us is the Dazhou Kingdom. I’ve marked their location on the map, go to their kingdom and borrow their Space Gate to get back.”

Qing Shaofan took the map and observed it for a while before putting it away and leaving the palace.

After Qing Shaofan left, Qin Wuming's eyes looked around the place before sighing, "Now we will have to wait here for any more information. The Saint Ruler is someone we alone cannot go against. We must await news from the Imperial Protectors."

Afterward, the twelve Heaven Saint Masters remained within the imperial palace. However, no one dared disturb Jian Chen while he healed. He had the entire palace hall to recover in while the other twelve looked for their own palace halls to reside in around the entire place.

In his room, Jian Chen remained weakly on the bed. After he felt the twelve Heaven Saint Masters leave, he finally began to make use of his mind to gather all of the Radiant Saint Force in the world to begin his recovery.

Jian Chen was at the equivalent level of a Sixth Class Radiant Saint Master, so his ability to control the Radiant Saint Force was far stronger than before. In a moment, a condensed milky-white ball of Radiant Saint Force appeared in the room. The entire room was basked in its light. To the human eye, it was a dazzling glow of light that was soft to the sight, not hurtful. Even to the naked eye, it gave off a glow that was brighter than the sun, but did not hurt the eyes at all, instead, there was an especially comfortable feeling to it.

On the bed, Jian Chen was already completely basked in the Radiant Saint Force. He could see the Radiant Saint Force around him traveling within his body at a lightning quick speed. His body was a bottomless pit or a sponge that absorbed all of the Radiant

Saint Force without pause.

Under the treatment of the Radiant Saint Force, Jian Chen's injuries began to heal and recover at a rapid rate. The cracks over his skin and the injured internal organs in his body slowly began to recover. Even the fractured bones and blood vessels regrow at a rate that even the human eye could see.

Since Jian Chen had used the Chaotic Force to temper his body, his body's strength was many times stronger than before. With it being many times stronger, the recovery of his body had grown more difficult. It was no longer as simple as it was before. This was because the Chaotic Force had tempered his body to become stronger, meaning more Radiant Saint Force would be required to recover his body to such a level.

Jian Chen knew his body situation extremely well and felt quite helpless in his heart. The Chaotic Force had truly made his body far stronger than before, but in the case of an injury, it made recovery far more difficult instead of being easy like it was in the past.

Jian Chen was willing to bet that the more he used the Chaotic Force to temper and strengthen his body, the more Radiant Saint Force and the more strenuous it would be for recovery. At the very end, the Radiant Saint Force would become useless in effect.

"It would appear I need to become a Seventh Class Radiant Saint Master. This way, I'll be able to heal myself even after the Chaotic Force is used. Furthermore, there is still my brother's arms and legs as well as the white tiger cub's mother, Rum Guinness to

heal.” Jian Chen thought to himself, but he himself knew that becoming a Seventh Class Radiant Saint Master was still a long path to travel on. It was a path that was perhaps longer than the path from a Heaven Saint Master to a Saint Ruler.

# Chapter 511: Saint Ruler Of The Qinhuang Kingdom

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Jian Chen's usage of the Radiant Saint Force had been maintained for an entire day before his "spirit" consumption had finally been too much for him to take. In this time, a small portion of his body's wounds healed. It was not a complete recovery, but movement would not be too terribly hampered now.

Afterward, Jian Chen sat cross-legged on his bed with his face unintentionally facing the sky as he began to recover the spirit that he had used up. This was the very first time he had to recover his energy in such a fashion ever since he became a Heaven Saint Master.

With another day focused on restoration, Jian Chen's spirit had been replenished to the very max where he then resumed using the Radiant Saint Force to heal his wounds.

Continuing this pattern for five whole days, Jian Chen finally healed himself completely. Then, with a change of his clothes, he exited his palace halls.

As soon as Jian chen walked out from the halls, the twelve individuals from the Qinhuang Kingdom came gathering in one after another. For the past week, they had been keeping guard over him from all corners while monitoring the outside for anything. So, Jian Chen's departure from his bedroom had been easily spotted by them.

Every single one of the twelve Heaven Saint Masters displayed stunned looks when they saw the healthy Jian Chen walk in front of them without a problem. Xiao Tian's mouth dropped open to ask, "Imperial Protector, your wounds have already fully healed?"

Jian Chen nodded. "Correct. I am fully healed now. With the Radiant Spirit Pills and another secret method, my recovery rate was accelerated."

Jian Chen's "secret method" had been Radiant Saint Force. The Radiant Saint Force was of a unique nature, and only Heaven Saint Masters or stronger would be able to sense it. Other people would be completely unable to sense it. Even with these Heaven Saint Masters, Jian Chen had spent the past few days making sure all of the Radiant Saint Force had been depleted so that none of the twelve would be able to sense it.

"Imperial Protector, Qing Shaofan has already returned to the Qinhuang Kingdom to request the four ancestors to come straight away. Right now we will just need to remain here for several days. I have faith that they will come straight away. Until then, we should discuss the best method on how to deal with the Sect of Dragon and Tiger." Qin Wuming spoke.

"That's fine. We'll stay here for two days. I especially will not let this matter with the Sect of Dragon and Tiger end like so." Jian Chen spoke with a dangerous gleam in his eyes.

"That is to be expected. The Imperial Protector's talent exceeds all others and could be said to be the first in the history of the Tian Yuan Continent. With such a frightening battle strength, no other

Heaven Saint Masters can be a match; you could be said to be even the strongest one beneath Saint Rulers. In the future when the Imperial protector breaks through to the Saint Ruler realm, what fear would there be for the Saint Ruler of the measly Sect of Dragon and Tiger? Even if the Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger established himself many years ago, I doubt he would be a match for the Imperial Protector then.” Tian Luo spoke with a serious and earnest expression. After traveling with Jian Chen for days, the five Heaven Saint Masters that had gone with Jian Chen to the Gesun Kingdom already had a decent grasp of how strong he was.

One may ask two Fifth Cycle Heaven Saint Masters and a Sixth Cycle Heaven Saint Master, who had lost to Jian Chen, just how many people beneath the Saint Rulers on the Tian Yuan Continent would be able to accomplish the same thing? Furthermore, back in front of the mountain gates to the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, Jian Chen had easily shattered the barrier that a Saint Ruler had personally placed on him. With such a glorious fighting strength, in the realm of Heaven Saint Masters aside from Jian Chen, what other person would be able to accomplish this same feat?

The same day Jian Chen had fully recovered, Qing Shaofan had reached the Dazhou Kingdom. After flashing proof of his identity, that he was from the Qinhuang Kingdom, the king of the Dazhou Kingdom treated him completely different than before and had become all smiles with him.

Although the Dazhou Kingdom was quite far from the Gesun Kingdom and the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom, the news that had transpired there made its way around like wildfire. Even the faraway Dazhou Kingdom had heard the news and understood that



the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom — a kingdom that was not as weak as the Dazhou Kingdom — had been laid waste to and destroyed by 500,000 elite soldiers and more than a dozen individuals from the Qinhuang Kingdom. This had allowed even the commoners of the continent to see the terrifying might of one of the Eight Great Powers.

When they learned that Qing Shaofan was an Imperial Advisor for the Qinhuang Kingdom and wished to use the Space Gate to return to the Qinhuang Kingdom, the king of the Dazhou Kingdom no longer held any doubts to his identity. He didn't even need proof that Qing Shaofan was who he said he was before allowing him to pass through their Space Gate to the Qinhuang Kingdom without any problems.

After returning to the Qinhuang Kingdom, Qing Shaofan ran like the wind and lightning back to the imperial palace where the Qin Heaven Palace was.

There was a total of five Qin Heaven Palaces in the imperial palace of the Qinhuang Kingdom. Each one was dedicated specifically for an Imperial Protector to use. They were the five palaces that held the most power in the imperial palace, and even the palace of the king of the Qinhuang Kingdom was incomparable.

Qing Shaofan arrived in front of one of the Qin Heaven Palace and was immediately stopped by one of the guards standing guard there.

“Please halt here, Imperial Advisor. Without the permission of

the honored Imperial Protector, no one may enter.” The imperial guard spoke politely to Qing Shaofan.

Qing Shaofan nodded his head. “If I may trouble you to ask the honored Imperial Protector, Qing Shaofan has a matter of extreme importance to report. This matter relates to the honor of our Qinhuang Kingdom and the Imperial Protector Jian Chen.”

Hearing this, the imperial guard knew that this matter was of critical importance. Solemnly, he replied, “Please wait here, Imperial Advisor. This humble officer will immediately report to the honored Imperial Protector!” With that, the imperial guard captain personally ran into the palace.

Rapidly, the captain came running back out from the Qin Heaven Palace and spoke to Qing Shaofan, “Imperial Advisor, please enter!”

With a bow, Qing Shaofan sucked in a deep breath and tidied up his own clothes before striding into the Qin Heaven Palace.

“By the request of the honored Imperial Protector, please follow this slave servant, Imperial Advisor Qing Shaofan.” As soon as Qing Shaofan entered the palace halls, a maid called out to him to follow her.

Not long after, the two came to a stop outside of a room. The doors to the room were closed shut, and the maid made no efforts to open them. Merely standing outside of them, she spoke respectfully, “A report for the honored Imperial Protector, the

Imperial Advisor Qing Shaofan has been brought.”

“You may leave!” A gentle but ample voice called out from within the room. From the voice, one could just barely make out the fact that this speaker was a middle-aged man.

“Yes, this slave servant will now depart!” The maid bowed before the door and left the area with light footsteps.

“Qing Shaofan wishes to pay his respects to the honored Imperial Protector.” After the maid had left, Qing Shaofan immediately bowed ritualistically to the doors respectfully. Behind these doors, there was a hermit at the level of a Saint Ruler. An entity that was essentially a paramount.

“Qing Shaofan, you have a matter to report!” The man was still speaking quite gently, giving a warm and cordial sense. Compared to the Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, it was completely different.

“Honored Imperial Protector, the matters is as it stands...”

After making his opening statement, Qing Shaofan spoke in great detail of what had happened. He made sure to emphasize the rampant matters of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger and how they did not place the Qinhuang Kingdom in their eyes at all. It was hard to hide the fury in his eyes, and at last, Qing Shaofan spoke of how the Saint Ruler had clearly known and acknowledged that Jian Chen was an Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom and had still inflicted a serious wound onto him.

Even the Imperial Protector in the room felt quite indignant after listening to Qing Shaofan's story. "The Sect of Dragon and Tiger knew that Jian Chen was an Imperial Protector for our Qinhuang Kingdom and still dared to attack him. This is simply an act against our Qinhuang Kingdom. Qing Shaofan, you acted appropriately. We of the Qinhuang Kingdom must protect the millennia of honor our country has built up. We will simply not allow anyone to challenge or make an enemy of our Qinhuang Kingdom. You may leave first. I will go discuss with the other three."

# Chapter 512: The Personal Arrival Of A Saint Ruler

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Even the Imperial Protector in the room felt quite indignant after listening to Qing Shaofan's story. "The Sect of Dragon and Tiger knew that Jian Chen was an Imperial Protector for our Qinhuang Kingdom and still dared to attack him. This is simply an act against our Qinhuang Kingdom. Qing Shaofan, you acted appropriately. We of the Qinhuang Kingdom must protect the millennia of honor our country has built up. We will simply not allow anyone to challenge or make an enemy of our Qinhuang Kingdom. You may leave first. I will go discuss with the other three."

"Yes, honored Imperial Protector, Qin Shaofan will be taking his leave then!" Qin Shaofan spoke respectfully before bowing with his body and leaving the room with a light step to his feet.

After Qin Shaofan had left, the doors had abruptly opened, revealing a white robed middle-aged looking man that slowly walked out.

The middle-aged man didn't look past forty years old, but his hair was completely white. There was nothing to hold his hair up, so his hair hung freely over his shoulder like a silver waterfall.

The man's face was stalwart. His pitch-black eyes contained a depth similar to the stars in the night sky. They seemed to hide even the world itself, but from the light in his eyes, it was as if there was another expansive world to be seen in there.

This middle-aged man was one of the Imperial Protectors of the Qinhuang Kingdom, Qin Yunlong. Qin Yunlong was a member of the imperial palace and had been the king for the kingdom a thousand years ago. Not long after he had abdicated the throne, he made a breakthrough to reach the paramount realm of a Saint Ruler. From then on, he hid himself away in the Qin Heaven Palace where very few had seen him.

After Qin Yunlong exited his room, he walked toward the other palaces. Passing through the drawing room at the center, several maids could be seen chatting there.

As a maid within the Qin Heaven Palace, their statuses were among the highest in the Qinhuang Kingdom. There weren't many things to do in the Qin Heaven Palace aside from cleaning and any other everyday affairs. The Imperial Protectors spent all their time within their rooms cultivating, and aside from anything major, they would never come out. Some of the maids had gone tens of years without hearing the voice of one of the Imperial Protectors.

When Qin Yunlong appeared without a sound right in front of these maids, they immediately halted their conversation to stare at Qin Yunlong in brief amazement. Even their most basic manners had been forgotten at that moment.

Although some maids had been in the Qin Heaven Palace for many years, they had never personally seen the Imperial Protector before. There were very few people aside from them that would visit the Qin Heaven palace since not many people had even the right to do so in the first place. Even the guards on the outside would never dare enter the palace without something serious to

report. So when this middle-aged man appeared in front of the maids, they were stunned for a good while. Ever since they had been hired to come to the Qin Heaven Palace, they had never seen a stranger enter it.

Not paying attention to the maids, Qin Yunlong walked toward the gates. As he approached the gates, they swung open without a sound.

Seeing Qin Yunlong disappear past the gates, the maids finally regained their wits. Thunderstruck, one of the maids let out a low gasp, “Dear heavens, he... he... he can’t be the honored Imperial Protector, could he?”

Hearing this, the other maids immediately became as pale as a sheet. “I didn’t think that the honored Imperial Protector would actually come out. It’s all over, we didn’t greet him at all. This isn’t respectful to the Imperial Protector at all! In the case that the honored Imperial Protector is offended, that’ll be a capital offense for all of us.”

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Outside the Qin Heaven Palace, the imperial guards standing watch at the gates saw Qin Yunlong and were stunned as well. However, they immediately shaped up. They knelt down on their knee, “This petty officer pays his respects to the honored Imperial Protector!” The captain guard boomed first. He had already watched over the Qin Heaven Palace for a hundred years, and the last time he had seen the Imperial Protector Qin Yunlong had been at least fifty years ago. He knew full well that this person in front

of him was one of the paramount Saint Rulers of the Tian Yuan Continent.

“This petty officer pays his respects to the honored Imperial Protector!”

The moment the imperial captain had mentioned “honored Imperial Protector” every single imperial guard standing watch over the Qin Heaven Palace immediately knew who this Qin Yunlong was and knelt down to the ground.

“There is no need to be so polite, rise!” Qin Yunlong rose both palms up, causing several hundred imperial guards to feel an immovable pressure come up from beneath their knees, bringing them up.

Qin Yunlong traveled through the imperial palace, and with each step he took, he traveled a few dozen meters. In a flash, he arrived at the other Qin Heaven Palace.

When he entered the Qin Heaven Palace, three elders had already gathered at a table. These three elders all had their hair tied up in a crane style, and aside from this, they were not that unordinary looking. Each one of them was extremely common in appearance — just like an ordinary elderly man. On the side, there were several maids trembling in fear as they poured tea.

Qin Yunlong didn’t even greet anyone there. He instead walked straight to his magnificent throne at the table.



“Elder Qin, what matter did you call us three here for?” One of the elders spoke. His voice was quite high pitch as if he was speaking from a horn.

Qin Yunlong thought for a moment before speaking, “It primarily pertains to Jian Chen.” After that statement, he told the other three elders what Qing Shaofan had told him.

“I may have heard of this Sect of Dragon and Tiger before. They were established a few thousand years ago, but that Saint Ruler they have only made the breakthrough a thousand years ago. From what I know, they only have one Saint Ruler. Yet, they still have the cheek to act against our Qinhuang Kingdom.” An elder spoke.

“Hmph, a single Saint Ruler still dares offend our Qinhuang Kingdom. It seems in the thousand year peace for our kingdom, there have been several factions that have seen fit to remove us from their eyes.”

Qin Yunlong spoke, “What do the three of you propose we do about this?”

“Jian Chen has a talent that exceeds all else. There is no one else in history who has been able to reach the Heaven Saint Master realm at such a young age as he did. With access to the holy lands, there is no need to debate if he will become a Saint Ruler, he may very well become a Saint King. Thus, he holds a very important position in our Qinhuang Kingdom. If the Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger dares act against him, then we cannot just sit idly; otherwise, Jian Chen may very well hold us complaint.”

“I agree with that. No matter if we deal with the Sect of Dragon and Tiger as a way to protect the honor of the Qinhuang Kingdom or as a substitute for Jian Chen’s response, we must all see this through in person. Do you all agree?” Another elder spoke.

Qin Yunlong chuckled, “I was a member of the imperial palace of the Qinhuang Kingdom, and this matter concerns the prestige of my Qinhuang Kingdom. There is no way I could not do anything. Harry and I will be all that’s needed to go.”

“That’ll do. With you two, there’ll be nothing to worry about even if the Sect of Dragon and Tiger has outside help. When will you two set out?”

“It is best not to delay matters, we will leave now.”

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Afterward, Qin Yunlong and Harry called in Qing Shaofan. He led the two Saint Rulers to the Space Gate to leave the Qinhuang Kingdom.

In the center of the imperial palace in the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom, there was a fist-sized hole in the middle of a large clearing. In that hole was another fist-sized crystal.

Just at that moment, a multi-colored light came flashing out from the previously ordinary looking crystal. After that flash, the

space above it began to ripple and twist before gradually forming a three meter high doorway.

When the Space Gate formed, Jian Chen and the other twelve individuals immediately sensed it. Flying into the middle of the palace at high-speeds, they came to a stop right in front of it. After the Space Gate had completely stabilized, one was able to clearly see the scene within the space — the imperial palace of the Qinhuang Kingdom.

Qing Shaofan and two Imperial Protectors from the Qinhuang Kingdom stepped through the Space Gate. The Space Gate then winked out of existence after they crossed.

“We pay our respects to the honored Imperial Protectors!” The twelve Imperial Advisors bowed in salute. They were all of the Qinhuang Kingdom and knew of the first four Imperial Protectors of the Qinhuang Kingdom.

Jian Chen stared curiously at the middle-aged and elderly man behind Qing Shaofan. Although he knew that both of them were Saint Rulers, his heart did not feel anything out of the ordinary. This was because he had seen this type of existence many times before. The first had been those dozen elders back in Mercenary City, and then the mother of the white tiger cub, Rum Guinness. Then, there was the old Ape King of the Spirit Apes. All of them were of the Saint Ruler realm.

After seeing so many Saint Rulers, Jian Chen had gradually grown insensitive to them, and no longer felt as excited as he had the first time he saw one.

The eyes of the two Saint Rulers gathered on Jian Chen before the elderly one smiled. “You must be Jian Chen!”

Jian Chen cupped his hands together, “This one is Jian Chen, I pay my respect to my seniors.”

“Jian Chen, there is no need for the politeness. I am Qin Yunlong, the 173rd generation king of the Qinhuang Kingdom. By my side is Harry, although he is not of our kingdom, he is my best friend.” Qin Yunlong smiled, speaking to Jian Chen as if they were on equal standing. In the eyes of the Qinhuang Kingdom, Jian Chen was the future pillar of the kingdom. Although there was currently four Saint Rulers for the Qinhuang Kingdom, they would not live forever. One day, there would come a time for their lives to end.

Seeing how amiable and approachable these two Saint Rulers were, Jian Chen gained a very nice first impression of the two.

Words of greeting and conversation were made promptly afterward before the two Saint Rulers moved to the crux of the problem. “Jian Chen, the two of us already know about the aggressions of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger. Our Qinhuang Kingdom will certainly not leave matters at this. You can lead the way, and we will meet and deal with that Saint Ruler.”

# Chapter 513: Invitation Of The Saint Ruler

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The arrival of two Saint Rulers had instilled a great amount of confidence in Jian Chen. His heart now no longer feared the Sect of Dragon and Tiger. After they had arrived, the entire group set off for the sect with the two Saint Rulers leading the way.

A day later, Jian Chen and the others from the Qinhuang Kingdom reached the Sect of Dragon and Tiger once more. Seeing the towering buildings of the sect on the mountain, no one felt any more pressure in their hearts. The pressure that was once exerted on them by the Saint Ruler was gone without a trace. That was due to the fact that the two Saint Rulers that had come from the Qinhuang Kingdom completely dominated over the one from the Sect of Dragon and Tiger.

“Honored guests from the Qinhuang Kingdom, if you are inclined, please come into the Sect of Dragon and Tiger to sit!”

When everyone had gotten close to the mountain gates, a calm elderly voice could be heard from the interior of the sect. This was the voice of the Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger.

Perhaps it was because he was dealing with two Saint Rulers from the Qinhuang Kingdom, but the Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger's attitude had completely vanished. Several days ago, Jian Chen and the other Heaven Saint Masters weren't able to pinpoint where the Saint Ruler's voice was coming from. However this time, they could clearly hear that it was coming from within the sect now.

The voice of the Saint Ruler had made its way to the ears of many individuals within the sect. In shock, they piled out one after another from the buildings and stared solemnly at the flying group of people off in the distance.

When the sectmaster Kris and the other Heaven Saint Masters heard the Saint Ruler speak, they grew especially grim. They knew that if the Saint Ruler called someone honored guests, then that meant they were of equal standings with him. Plus, there were two of them which meant the pressure they felt had multiplied greatly.

Qin Yunlong gave a cold smile as he stared deeply at the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, “You all stay here. Harry and I will go inside to meet with that Saint Ruler.”

After that, Qin Yunlong and Harry both transformed into two currents of light and flew to the sect at unbelievable speeds. Their speed was so fast that even the space around their bodies began to slightly distort.

In that split moment, the two figures of the Saint Rulers from the Qinhuang Kingdom disappeared from Jian Chen’s sight. Their speed had been so fast that even Jian Chen had been astonished.

Jian Chen and the others stared anxiously at the encampment where the sect was. “How do you think the two honored Imperial Protectors will deal with this situation?” Xiao Tian asked.

“That doesn’t even need to be said. The Sect of Dragon and Tiger may be a major sect on the continent, but they only have a single

Saint Ruler. How could they be a match for our Qinhuang Kingdom? The honor of our kingdom cannot be so easily violated. So I can see that if the Sect of Dragon and Tiger wishes to get by this peacefully, they have no other choice but to pay a hefty price.” One of the Imperial Advisors spoke.

“Correct. Now that two Imperial Protectors have personally arrived, the Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger wouldn’t dare keep the same attitude he had several days back, or else the Sect of Dragon and Tiger will be razed down to the ground today.”

“I would look forward to that. The destruction of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger isn’t very important, but what’s truly important is that we would have the good fortune of being able to witness a battle between Saint Rulers. I have lived for many years, but I have never seen a battle between Saint Rulers before.” Qin Wujian smiled joyously.

Hearing this, Qin Wutian agreed as well. “Yes, I wish to see that Saint Ruler remain unyielding. That way, we will be able to see the strength of a Saint Ruler.” The two brothers had an expectant gleam in their eyes in eagerness to see the two Saint Rulers from the Qinhuang Kingdom fight against the Saint Ruler from the Sect of Dragon and Tiger.

Hearing the two chatter, Qin Wuming’s face grew slightly dark as he growled, “You two settle down. Are you two even capable of discussing the matters of the Imperial Protectors?”

Qin Wuming was clearly held in high regard by both Qin Wujian and Qin Wutian. With a few words, Qin Wujian and Qin Wutian

instantly grew quiet. Although they were all Heaven Saint Masters, the two brothers didn't dare go against their own father.

Afterward, no one bothered to speak anymore. They watched the empty space above the Sect of Dragon and Tiger in silence. Many of them had already predicted a good show, leaving them quite expectant.

In this quiet moment, time seemed to have gone by in rapid succession. Unknowingly, a candle wicks worth of time had passed by, but there had been no explosion or sounds of battle to be seen or heard from the interior of the sect. Not even a single iota of battle presence could be felt; it was as if all was quiet in the world.

Seeing the period of calmness in the sect, Jian Chen's eyebrows creased together. This was something he felt was different than what he had imagined.

Continuing to stand there, two hours had quickly gone by before the two Saint Rulers from the Qinhuang Kingdom finally came back out.

Upon this sight, Jian Chen had a look of disappointment flash briefly across his face before disappearing just as quickly. The two Saint Rulers' way of dealing with this situation had been quite different than what Jian Chen had expected. In his mind, he would never let such a matter like this be let off so easily. He had been heavily injured by the Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger after all. If not for the fact that the Saint Ruler had been afraid of his title of an Imperial Protector, then Jian Chen might have not been able to leave the sect that day.



That was because the Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger had deeply coveted the strength of the azure and violet Sword Spirits Jian Chen had.

The two Saint Rulers walked into view of everyone, but their faces were quite unwell, gloomy even. Qin Yunlong especially had a bit of a frosty gleam in his usually deep eyes.

The thirteen Heaven Saint Masters and Jian Chen tried to discern information from their body language. Seeing how the two Saint Rulers were in such a state, everyone grew quiet for a moment, instantly growing serious. They all realized that the situation had to have some sort of terrifying or unwanted turn of events.

“Seniors, what is the result of this matter?” Jian Chen couldn’t help but ask. In this group, only he had an identity high enough to speak. If it wasn’t him that did, then it wouldn’t be suitable.

Qin Yunlong spoke, “Jian Chen, your grievances with the Sect of Dragon and Tiger concludes here.”

Hearing this, Jian Chen’s face changed abruptly. Muttering, he asked, “Seniors, could it be that the Sect of Dragon and Tiger is far too strong to have seniors be afraid?”

Qin Yunlong shook his head, “That isn’t it. The Sect of Dragon and Tiger is nothing to worry about, but there is still a secret to be revealed here. Jian Chen, we two will head back to the Qinhuang

Kingdom straight away and will be taking our leave first.”

“May seniors have a good voyage!” Jian Chen cupped his hands.

“May the honored Imperial Protectors have a good voyage!” The thirteen Heaven Saint Masters bowed in respect.

Qin Yunlong stared at the thirteen individuals and spoke, “Help Imperial Protector Jian Chen tidy up the rest of the affairs here and then come back when finished.” With that, Qin Yunlong and Harry immediately left the area. Their speed was extremely fast, and in that instant, they had already disappeared off into the horizon with haste.

Seeing the two Saint Rulers recede away, Jian Chen and the other thirteen felt unwell. From the appearances of the two Saint Rulers, everyone could tell that something terrifying must have happened and bore relevance to the Qinhuang Kingdom.

“Let us go back then!” Jian Chen called out to everyone and prepared to leave.

“Might everyone stay here for a little longer!” Suddenly, a voice called out from behind. Everyone could see the sectmaster Kris come flying out. He ascended in front of Jian Chen.

Seeing the sectmaster Kris, Jian Chen’s face darkened as he spoke coldly, “Sectmaster Kris, what business might you have?” If not for the fact that there was a Saint Ruler hidden in the sect behind

him, then Jian Chen would wish nothing more than to inflict yet more serious damage to Kris.

There was a carefree smile on his face as if he had completely forgotten about the matters that had happened a few days ago. Cupping his hands, he spoke, “Imperial Protector, our elder sectmaster wishes for you to sit within our sect for the time being.”

Hearing this, Jian Chen started while the other thirteen individuals from the Qinhuang Kingdom instantly displayed gloomy and cold expressions on their faces.

Sensing the hostility from everyone around him, Kris revealed a faint smile, “Everyone needs not worry. Our elder sectmaster only wishes to chat with the Imperial Protector and increase our goodwill with each other. There will be nothing done to make it unfavorable for the Imperial Protector. After all, our sect doesn’t dare become an enemy for your Qinhuang kingdom.”

The thirteen felt the tension ease from their faces, but they looked to Jian Chen one after another. If it had been anyone else that had asked, then they would have said no for Jian Chen, but the request had come from an enemy Saint Ruler.

Jian Chen hesitated. He didn’t know just what the Saint Ruler had done to make the two Saint Rulers from the Qinhuang Kingdom give up their pursuit on this matter, but the words Qin Yunlong had mentioned before comforted Jian Chen — the Sect of Dragon and Tiger was nothing to worry about.

With that in mind, Jian Chen felt a little relieved. Agreeing to Kris' proposal, he replied, "If I don't go, it would appear that I, Jian Chen, feared your Sect of Dragon and Tiger. That's all then. If your elder sectmaster wishes to talk with me, then I will see just what he wishes to talk with me about." Jian Chen turned back to the thirteen Heaven Saint Masters, "Wait here for the moment. I will go in." With that, Jian Chen didn't delay for even a second and flew straight into the interior of the sect.

Under Kris' lead, Jian Chen arrived at the mountain in the back of the sect and finally came to a stop right in front of a cavern.

"Imperial Protector, the elder sectmaster is in this place. I'm afraid I cannot accompany you into this cavern." Kris spoke to Jian Chen right outside of the entrance.

Jian Chen didn't speak a word and strode into the cavern by himself. Passing through a hundred meter corridor, he finally arrived at an expansive space within the mountain. It was well illuminated, and countless of fist-sized night pearls adorned the ceiling of the cavern to provide the entire place with some light.

The cavern was simple in arrangement. In the middle, there was a simple stone table built, and a single layer of dust could be clearly seen on the table. This cavern had clearly not been swept for a very long time. Not only was the table like this, but even the ground was no exception. Whenever Jian Chen took a step, a clear footprint could be seen left behind.

Jian Chen swept his eyes around the place only to discover that there was no one here. Just as he was about to become doubtful, a

clear sound could be heard from the side where a stone door began to open, allowing a black-robed elder to appear in front of Jian Chen.

This elder had a crane-styled haircut and was quite tall and sturdy. His back was built like a bear and his shoulders like a tiger. Just standing there, he was like a tall shield at about two meters tall — a height that was about a head taller than Jian Chen.

## Chapter 514: Negotiations

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Seeing this elder, Jian Chen's eyes flashed with a fierce gleam that was not at all hard to see. There was no need to even think to know that this elder was without a doubt the Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger.

Jian Chen stood there in silence and observed the Saint Ruler without a word of greeting or movement. There was no good-will felt for this Saint Ruler since the memory of him being severely injured by him was still fresh in Jian Chen's mind.

The elder paid no mind to Jian Chen's silence and lackluster movements. He just stared at Jian Chen with eyes that seemed unnaturally deep. They almost seemed capable of seeing through the secrets Jian Chen had without fail. With a smile, he spoke, "It is no wonder you are an Imperial Protector for the Qinhuang Kingdom even as a Heaven Saint Master. With a talent that exceeds all others, it is still rare to see someone so young to step into the Heaven Saint Master realm."

The Saint Ruler paused his words when he didn't see Jian Chen reply, but continued to speak again afterward. "There is a life-or-death threshold to cross from an Earth Saint Master to a Heaven Saint Master. This threshold is one of the only times of danger a cultivator experiences in his or her progression. For an Earth Saint Master to make the breakthrough to become a Heaven Saint Master, they need to be able to control the energy of the world as well. This step is something that countless of talented Earth Saint Masters may not be able to accomplish; thus, their road ends there. Only a few destined ones make it past this obstruction and make that next step into the realm of the Heaven Saint Masters."

“It is more difficult than the previous two obstacles for a Heaven Saint Master to make the breakthrough to become a Saint Ruler. For to become a Saint Ruler, one must be able to comprehend the mysteries of the world. These mysteries of the world are far more complex than the energies of the world, cultivation talent will not make up for the deficit of not understanding. Within the Tian Yuan Continent, those with unparalleled talent are not many, but there are still enough that have become a Heaven Saint Master under the age of fifty. Among those that did, the ones that became a Saint Ruler can be counted on one’s fingers. However even among them, there are many that fell off the road halfway and were unable to understand the mysteries of the world and remained a Heaven Saint Master.”

Hearing this, Jian Chen’s eyebrows creased together and spoke expressionlessly “Senior, did you call me here in hopes to give me this tidbit of information?”

The Saint Ruler gave a faint smile, “Don’t be in such a hurry. Listen to what I have to say first, Jian Chen. I know that you are the number one mercenary from the most recent Gathering of the Mercenaries, and you were able to enter the holy lands to cultivate. Although legend has it on the continent that anyone that is able to enter the holy lands will later make the breakthrough to become a Saint Ruler, it is only a possibility. Think about how long Mercenary City has existed on the continent, and how many times a person was able to enter the holy lands to cultivate every fifty years. With so many years gone by since its creation, the amount of people that have entered the holy lands are plenty, but in the end, how many of them managed to become a Saint Ruler?”

The Saint Ruler looked to Jian Chen and continued to speak, “Jian Chen, I have a scroll here that I found several hundred years ago in a cave that belonged to a Saint Ruler. This scroll contains the realizations of a Heaven Saint Master that became a Saint Ruler and was what I relied upon years ago to study and make the breakthrough to become a Saint Ruler. Although this scroll is not that useful for a Saint Ruler, it is a treasure among treasures for a Heaven Saint Master, for this scroll is a shortcut to the path of a Saint Ruler.”

Hearing this, Jian Chen could already more or less figure out what the Saint Ruler was planning. His mouth curled into an icy smile, “Senior, do you mean to say that you wish to give this scroll to me in exchange for something from me, correct?”

“Correct!” The Saint Ruler gave up beating around the bush and continued with what he had wanted to say straight away, “Jian Chen, this old man can give you this scroll free of charge, but on one condition, this old man wishes to know about the secret of that mysterious power. Where would one be able to obtain this secret, and how would one be able to cultivate its secrets?”

Jian Chen didn’t hesitate to shake his head with the same cold smile, “My apologies, senior. Please forgive this one for not being able to answer!”

The Saint Ruler was not angered. It seemed that he had predicted this outcome and patiently explained, “Jian Chen, consider this deal for a while. Although you may be the strongest of all beneath Saint Rulers with that energy, you are still a weak little ant in front of a Saint Ruler. To exchange the mystery that is that energy for a



shortcut to become a Saint Ruler does not negatively impact you.”

“There is no need for considerations. Senior, if there is nothing more that needs to be said, then this one will be taking my leave.” Jian Chen cupped his hands and prepared to leave.

“Jian Chen, if you are still not pleased with this transaction, then I will add on an additional object.” The Saint Ruler was adamant and really wished to know the mystery behind the energy Jian Chen possessed.

Jian Chen hesitated slightly, but for the Saint Ruler to learn of the Origin energy of the azure and violet Sword Spirits, that was not a good thing. Despite his concerns, Jian Chen did not yield, “I am afraid to disappoint senior, but no matter what priceless treasure you offer me, I will not divulge my secrets. Senior, please give up on this.” With that, Jian Chen turned around and left. Despite the other person being a Saint Ruler, he did not fear him at all.

After Jian Chen had left, the Saint Ruler’s warm expression instantly froze over. Staring at the disappearing figure of Jian Chen, his eyes revealed a frosty glare, “If you refuse my toast, then take the wine instead!” With that, the space within the cave seemed to instantly freeze over, and it seemed that time had completely stopped within.

After leaving the sect, Jian Chen’s heart grew firm. Now that the Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger was thinking about the Origin energy of the azure and violet Sword Spirits, this could be a potential threat to Jian Chen. Although he had the support of the

Qinhuang Kingdom, the Sect of Dragon and Tiger wouldn't be too afraid to conduct a covert move against him.

Jian Chen regrouped with Xiao Tian and the others. When they saw how serious Jian Chen was, someone immediately asked in concern, "Imperial Protector, did the Saint Ruler not do anything with you?"

"He covets the energy I wield." Jian Chen spoke gravely.

Hearing this, the dozen Imperial Advisors blanched. To have a Saint Ruler set his eyes on someone was not a good thing. Furthermore, they could all predict what would happen after this was over.

"Imperial Protector, we may as well head back to the Qinhuang Kingdom. In there, the Sect of Dragon and Tiger wouldn't dare do anything to you." Tian Luo proposed.

"For the time being, I cannot. There is still plenty I need to do. Well, we shouldn't talk about this for now. Let's leave first, it's unclear whether or not the things we fear are superfluous or not." Jian Chen spoke.

A day later, the group of people arrived back at the imperial palace of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom. As soon as they had descended, a single silver-armored soldier came running forward and knelt in front of Jian Chen, "A report for the honored Imperial Protector. The treasury has been completely dismantled. All of the materials have been placed within Space Rings and are ready for

transport.”

Jian Chen took the Space Ring and inspected the materials inside. Sure enough, there were plenty of piles of tempered steel that formed a mini-mountain range.

Jian Chen kept the Space Ring and spoke to every soldier, “Gather everyone and return to the Gesun Kingdom.”

The matters within the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom had long since been finished, and the business with the Sect of Dragon and Tiger had been temporarily finished. There was no point in staying here any longer, so Jian Chen and the group had no desire to stay in the imperial palace either. They immediately left the palace, and returned to the Gesun Kingdom.

This time, the entire group split between two paths. Jian Chen and the Imperial Advisors traveled together through the air toward the Gesun Kingdom while the three generals traveled with the hundred elite soldiers, who were mounted on their magical beasts, toward the Gesun Kingdom on ground.

With the speed of flying through the air, Jian Chen and the ten other individuals had only wasted two days worth of time before arriving back at the Gesun Kingdom. When they descended down into Lore City, they were greeted by the 500,000 Eastern Deity Soldiers who had returned several days before them. At this moment, all of the soldiers were gathered in a large encampment near Lore City.

Jian Chen and the other ten individuals from the Qinhuang Kingdom entered Lore City and slowly landed in the Changyang Manor.

The Changyang Manor had been completed several days ago as well. Its scale was at least double than what it was before and a giant street now encompassed the outside of it. The ceremony for the manor had not been conducted because the most important figure of the Changyang clan had not returned yet. The family and guards of the Changyang clan had remained within the inns, living there during this time. Before the ceremony started, no one dared enter the manor. This was one of the traditions of the Tian Yuan Continent they feared to break.

As soon as Jian Chen and his group descended down to the ground, another group of people could be seen hurrying toward them. Leading the group was Changyang Ba and Bi Yuntian. Chang Wuji and several of the other elders followed them from behind.

Seeing the ten Imperial Advisors gather around Jian Chen like the stars around the moon, Changyang Ba displayed a look of utmost pride in his eyes. Laughing merrily, he spoke, “Xiang’er, I didn’t think that you would return this quickly. We only returned two hours ago ourselves.”

Seeing his parents, Jian Chen immediately felt happier and smiled in greeting, “Father, mother!”

“Xiang’er, the matters with the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom have been taken care of now, correct? There was no problems I hope.” Changyang Ba asked in concern.

“En, everything has been taken care of. Father doesn’t need to worry about these matters anymore.” Jian Chen gave a comforting smile. He simply didn’t dare speak about the matters that had happened with the Sect of Dragon and Tiger since he knew that his parents would be even more worried.

“That’s fine then. Xiang’er, the manor has been completely rebuilt. Now that you’ve returned, let us conduct the official ceremony in three days. Xiang’er, was there something you wanted to say?” Changyang Ba spoke. In front of his own son, he seemed to have forgotten about his own position as the head of the clan and completely handed the discussion over to Jian Chen.

“Father, as long as you are the host, then it’s fine.” Jian Chen smiled.

“So it’ll be then. Now that this matter is over, Chang Wuji, I’ll have to trouble you with sending out the invitations. Please invite the officials of the Gesun Kingdom for them to participate in the official ceremony of the Changyang Manor in three days time.” Changyang Ba boomed with laughter.

# Chapter 515: A Visit From Elders Feng And Yun

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The situation for the Changyang clan in the Gesun Kingdom was far different than before. The opening ceremony was extremely magnificent, and every single major party within the kingdom had been invited — even the Hua Yun Sect that had caused trouble for the Changyang clan had been no exception.

No one that had received an invitation had declined it. On the very first day after the invitations were sent out, plenty of people had already shown up to Lore City. These people were all the strongest representatives of their respective clans or families, and they were here to pay respect to the honorable Changyang Clan. As a side mission, they were trying their best to show the friendliest of intentions to them.

This time, the inhabitants of the Gesun Kingdom weren't the only ones that knew about the trek of the Qinhuang Kingdom and Gesun Kingdom to the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom. All of the surrounding kingdoms had gained knowledge of the information as well. It stirred a giant wave of attention from even the more influential factions. Even the movement of the Eastern Deity Swords had been investigated before everyone had made a startling conclusion. The reason why the Qinhuang Kingdom was helping the Gesun Kingdom was because of the Changyang clan.

Therefore, even people who hadn't been invited to the opening ceremony of the Changyang clan showed up alongside the ones that had with plenty of precious gifts to present to the clan. All sorts of nobles showed up to Lore City, giving every single inn

within the city to reach an all time high of prosperity in the history of their business. Some inns had completely filled up within a single day, forcing several mercenaries to have no choice but to camp in the city outskirts.

The guests who had arrived late all had a look of helplessness when they saw the jampacked inns. In the end, they had to take a leaf from the mercenaries' book and set up a camp in an open clearing with feelings of injustice.

The amount of people coming to congratulate them caused the entire Changyang clan to be taken back, but under the careful arrangements of Chang Bai, he was able to expand the entire banquet out onto the surrounding streets. There were now well over a thousand tables, and every single chef from Lore City had been hired to help.

Three days later, the Changyang clan's banquet finally started, but the ceremonial host was Changyang Ba while Jian Chen himself was hidden from sight. This led many people, that were looking forward to seeing Jian Chen, to feel disappointed.

The ceremony for the opening of the manor had been grand, but it did not last for long. After a single day, it was over. On the second day, every single person visiting had left one after another.

After the ceremony ended, the people of the Changyang clan finally began to officially move in and recruit some more guards. Although the Changyang clan was well known without anyone in the Gesun Kingdom daring to go against them, there was still plenty of work to do.

Within the center of the newly constructed Changyang clan, there was a magnificent hall created for Jian Chen, which had been proposed by the elders of the clan. This would be a place meant specifically for Jian Chen to use, and not only was the exterior magnificent, the interior design and decorations were splendid.

At this moment, Jian Chen, You Yue, Ming Dong, Qin Ji, Dugu Feng, Yun Zheng, and Senior An were all gathered around a round table.

At that moment, a guard came running in, “A report for the fourth master, there are two guests who go by the names elder Feng and elder Yun here to see you.”

“What? Elders Yun and Feng!” Jian Chen was startled. Those two elders were from the Huang family, but he never would have thought that the two of them would have taken the initiative to look for him.

“Could they be here for the Saint Ruler’s skeleton?” Jian Chen couldn’t help but think with a dark expression.

“Jian Chen. Who are these two elders? Are they friend or foe?” Ming Dong asked.

Jian Chen hesitated before saying, “Acquaintances from the past. If everyone could sit here for now, I will take my leave first.” With that, Jian Chen immediately left the room to walk to the gates of



Changyang Manor where the two elders, Feng and Yun, were waiting. The two of them displayed gentle smiles and gave off the feeling of amiable and friendly people.

“Seniors, what wind has brought you two here to my home today? This one is truly surprised.” Jian Chen cupped his hands together with a smile to greet the two.

“Haha, fourth master, perhaps, are we not welcome to pay a visit here?” Elder Feng cupped his hands in return. Using the title ‘fourth master’ instead of Jian Chen was a sign of speaking to Jian Chen with his proper title.

“Seniors are definitely welcome, please, come in.” Jian Chen smiled cordially and led the two elders into the manor.

Within one of the more private rooms, the three men sat down before Jian Chen spoke straightforwardly, “Seniors, I presume you are not here for the Saint Ruler’s skeleton.”

The two elders laughed merrily before elder Feng replied, “The fourth master misunderstands, the two of us are here solely to pay a visit and not for the skeleton. You are after all a benefactor of our Huang family. While the Saint Ruler’s skeleton is important, our Huang family will not show ingratitude to a friend. Neither would we do such an act like that and earn animosity with the Qinhuang Kingdom, we would not dare infuriate an Imperial Protector from that kingdom.”

Hearing this, Jian Chen’s eyes flashed with a gleam of light. He

hadn't thought that the Huang family would be able to find out that he was the Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom so fast.

When he heard that the Huang family was not here for the Saint Ruler's skeleton, Jian Chen let out a sigh in relief. With a brief moment of hesitation, he spoke, "If not for the Saint Ruler's skeleton, then what matters might seniors be here for?"

"Haha, fourth master. We are here because our patriarch wishes to invite you to serve as an honored guest at our Huang family." Elder Feng smiled.

"You wish for me to be a guest at your Huang family? There are no social ties between your Huang family and I." Jian Chen was suspicious.

"Haha, fourth master, it is our patriarch that invited you. Whatever reason there might be, the two of us do not know. The fourth master just needs to understand that our Huang family bears no ill will toward you." Elder Feng spoke.

"Yes, fourth master, our Huang family has no grudge to bear against you. Not only does our patriarch wish to see you, the young miss wishes to see you again as well." Elder Yun sighed, "If not for the fact that our young miss is currently busy taking care of several matters at home, I'm afraid she would have sought you out earlier."

Hearing elder Yun mention the young miss, Jian Chen

immediately thought of the yellow-robed woman of unmatched beauty as well as the very beginning part of the free-for-all portion of the Gathering of the Mercenaries. Unconsciously, he asked, “Is it Huang Luan?”

“Correct, it is the young miss, Huang Luan. Fourth master, our young miss has been missing you quite so for these past few suns. If you come to our Huang family, please come see her as well.” Elder Yun sighed with a complicated expression on his face.

Jian Chen sat there in deliberation for a brief moment before nodding, “Fine then. I agree to visit your Huang family. What time would you like?”

At this, the two elders immediately grew excited. “Fourth master, if you have nothing important at the moment, then we can go now.”

“Go now? That quickly?” Jian Chen was stunned.

Elder Feng nodded. “There is indeed some panic because the young miss has come across some trouble and wishes to see if you can help her. To be brief, the sooner we go, the better.”

Hearing elder Feng speak, Jian Chen had made up his mind. “Fine then, please wait for me as I bid farewell to my family.”

An hour later, Jian Chen had said goodbye to everyone and followed the two elders away from the Changyang Manor. Along

with the three, Xiao Tian, Qing Shaofan, Cao Keqin, Dongyi Junbai, and Tian Luo all came with Jian Chen.

Taking the five of them to the Huang family had been Qin Ji's idea. When Qin Ji had heard that Jian Chen was going to the Huang family, he had immediately worried for Jian Chen's safety. He had been adamant that Jian Chen bring five Imperial Advisors with him. In the end, Jian Chen had no other choice but to agree to Qin Ji's request. Taking five of the most trusted Imperial Advisors to serve as a way to show off prestige.

It was only 30,000 kilometers from the Gesun Kingdom to the Huang family. Jian Chen and the five Imperial Advisors only needed a single day and night to follow the two elders before finally arriving at their home.

The Huang family was a family-based power that was located on top of a beautiful and spiritually rich mountain. From the moment Jian Chen and the others descended down, they could see plenty of buildings littering the mountains.

As they drew near, two Heaven Saint Masters flew up from the compound and stopped right in front of the two elders Yun and Feng.

These two middle-aged men were tall and sturdy with doughty faces. Their tiger eyes gleamed brilliantly and hid a tremendous amount of power within them.

Jian Chen sized up the two men in front of him. From just how

much power they exuded, Jian Chen guessed that these two men were at the very least Fourth Cycle Heaven Saint Masters.

“So it’s elder Feng and elder Yun.” The two men cupped their hands toward the elder before their eyes turned to stare at Jian Chen and the five Imperial Advisors.

The two elders returned the greeting before turning around to Jian Chen. “Fourth master, these two are elders of our Huang family. The two of them are brothers named Huang Lan and Huang Feng.”

“This one is Jian Chen. I wish the two elders good health.” Jian Chen put on a faint smile and cupped his hands together. The other five Imperial Advisors bowed as well with their hands cupped together, but they remained silent.

Elder Feng continued to speak, “Elders Huang Lan and Huang Feng, these five are the honored guests from the Qinhuang Kingdom and are here by invitation from the patriarch.”

# Chapter 516: Ancestor Of The Huang Family

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Upon hearing that Jian Chen and the others were guests from the Qinhuang Kingdom here by invitation from the patriarch, Huang Lan and Huang Feng immediately grew solemn and began to look at Jian Chen and the others in a new light.

The Qinhuang Kingdom was several times stronger than someone like the Huang family.

“We welcome our guests from the Qinhuang Kingdom into our Huang family. Your arrival has truly brought light to our humble Huang family, please, come in.” Elder Huang Lan spoke cordially and guided the others in with a smile.

“Elders Huang Lan and Huang Feng, please continue with whatever tasks you have. I will be bringing our guests to the patriarch at once.” Elder Feng smiled.

Huang Lan and Huang Feng immediately felt some veneration for the patriarch at the mention of him. In the Huang family, the patriarch was the one they held in the highest esteem.

“Then we won’t waste the precious time of our honored guests. Elder Feng, elder Yun, we’ll leave the two of you to receive our guests then.” Elder Huang Feng smiled. Ever since they had realized that Jian Chen and the others were from the Qinhuang Kingdom, their attitudes had grown extremely amiable.

After bidding farewell to the two elders, elder Feng and Yun led

Jian Chen inside the compound and to a gigantic palace at the center of it.

Upon arrival, a single middle-aged man walked out from the hall, “Elder Feng, elder Yun, the patriarch is already waiting for you all in the halls. If everyone could please enter.”

The two elders nodded before guiding Jian Chen and the five Imperial Advisors into the hall.

It was extensively spacious in the hall, but it was filled with a tremendous amount of pressure. Despite the simple arrangement inside, Jian Chen could distinctly feel the broad amount of grandeur that disseminated from the the entire hall in a different way than the imperial palace of the Qinhuang Kingdom.

This hall had existed for a very long time. Although it was built with plenty of precious building materials, it was not able to withstand the passage of time. The entire hall had the scars left behind by time, giving it an ancient but desolate feeling.

Jian Chen’s eyes looked around at the twenty or so chairs placed on both sides of the giant hall. Ten other elders around the age of seventy could be seen seated without a word, their eyes closed. On the throne up front, a single white-robed crane-haired elder could be seen seated on it. There was a faint smile on his face that gave the impression of being warm and gentle as if he was a benevolent old man.

Just as Jian Chen and the group of seven all entered the hall, the

ten elders opened their eyes at the same time. Their eyes were full of a bright light that seemed to stare curiously at the six.

“Patriarch, the honored guests have been brought. This one here is the one invited, while the others behind him are the Imperial Advisors for the Qinhuang Kingdom.” At the center of the palace, the elder Feng cupped his hands and spoke to the elder seated at the front.

“This one is Jian Chen, I pay my respects to patriarch Huang!” Jian Chen smiled as he cupped his hands.

The seated elder returned a smile to Jian Chen, “For an Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom to stay as a guest in my Huang family, it is a great honor. Please, have a seat!” The destruction of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom had been something every single power in the vicinity had paid attention to. Therefore, Jian Chen’s identity as an Imperial Protector for the Qinhuang Kingdom had long since been known to them.

Jian Chen and the other five Imperial Advisors wasted no more time and sat in vacant chairs.

Once everyone was seated, the seated patriarch spoke out loud, “Allow this humble person to introduce myself. This old man was the patriarch of the Huang family two generations ago, but that was well over sixty years ago. Originally I had planned to stay within the back of the mountains to cultivate and ignore the family matters, but a visit from an honored guest from the Qinhuang Kingdom is far too important for this old man to not personally oversee. If I was negligent in receiving, please excuse this one for



it.”

Afterward, Jian Chen and the patriarch exchanged several more words before quickly getting to the center of the problem.

“Imperial Protector, this time I have invited you here to be an honored guest in our household. Aside from a matter with the ancestor, our Huang family still has a small understanding we wish to resolve with the Imperial Protector.” The patriarch spoke.

“Patriarch, please just call me Jian Chen. It is more pleasing to the ear to me, and for whatever business it is, the patriarch is free to say it without worry.” Jian Chen replied.

“Then, I will call you Jian Chen from here on out.” The patriarch continued, “Jian Chen, I heard of what had transpired in that empty space in the Gathering of the Mercenaries from the mouth of Huang Luan directly. Right here, I wish to represent the Huang family as I give our thanks to you for helping safeguard our Solunar Bow.”

Although a Ruler Armament is an extremely precious treasure to any family, the bicentennial Gathering of the Mercenaries was also very important. It meant so much to people that the Huang family, the shi family, and even the Qinhuang Kingdom had spent countless amounts of energy in vying for the number one spot in the tournament. For whoever was able to become the King of mercenaries would possess the right of being able to cultivate in the holy lands for a period of time. This was a very good way of setting the foundation to become a Saint Ruler in the future. Thus, every single top-notch family would do their best to help

whichever outstanding talent they had. As long as they had the possibility of someone in their family becoming number one, it didn't matter how many more times they participated in the Gathering of the Mercenaries, they would still gain a Heaven Tier Battle Skill to take home.

Huang Luan was the most outstanding person to appear within that generation of the Huang family. Not only was she a direct descendant of the main family, she was already an Earth Saint Master at her age. For that reason, the patriarch had decided on lending her a Ruler Armament to use in hopes that she could demonstrate her extraordinary talent within the Gathering of the Mercenaries and hopefully become number one. If she happened to gain the rights to cultivate in the holy lands, then with her talent in cultivation, Huang Luan would in the future make the breakthrough to become a Saint Ruler that would make it worthwhile for her to use the Solunar Bow in the Gathering of the Mercenaries.

However, the Huang family had made a miscalculation in regards to the empty space. They never would have imagined that the Shi family would actually take advantage of the empty space to try and take away the Solunar Bow. The Huang family had nearly lost their Ruler Armament because of their lack of defenses, but it was fortunately thanks to Jian Chen that the Ruler Armament had been able to return safely to the Huang family.

Jian Chen laughed when he listened to the patriarch. "This one once had a meeting of fate with miss Huang Luan before, but I owed the young miss a favor for that. That matter with the young miss in the empty space was a chance for this one to make it up to the miss Huang Luan, so the patriarch shouldn't weigh too much

importance to this.”

The patriarch had no idea that Jian Chen had once met Huang Luan before and had taken his words to merely be said out of politeness. Thus, he did not spend any more time worrying about this problem.

“There is still a second matter.” The patriarch continued to speak, but after that moment, an embarrassed look overcame his face. Apologetically, he spoke to Jian Chen, “Jian Chen, I know of the matter that happened days ago. It was nothing more than a misunderstanding on our part. We hope that you will pay it no mind. That elder in question has already been deeply punished.”

Jian Chen waved his hand without a care, “I’ve long since forgotten about that matter. The patriarch needn’t worry about it. If anything, it was the Qiangnan Kingdom that gave rise to this problem.”

Seeing that Jian Chen hadn’t cared for the matter with the Saint Ruler’s skeleton, the patriarch could finally rest in peace. This was after all an Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom, meaning that he could not be easily offended. Furthermore, even if he was not an Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom, Jian Chen was still a benefactor to the Huang family. To forget their favors and violate kindness was something that the Huang family didn’t dare commit to.

Just as the patriarch was about to continue speaking, his face suddenly slackened. Just as quickly as it changed, his face calmed down again, “Jian Chen, our ancestor wishes to meet with you.

Please follow me, I will take you to the secluded part of the mountain where our ancestor is. Elder Feng, elder Yun, please show the rest of the Imperial Advisors from the Qinhuang Kingdom where they will be resting.”

Afterward, Xiao Tian and the group followed the two elders while Jian Chen followed the patriarch to the backside of the mountain.

Jian Chen flew behind the patriarch of the Huang family toward the back of the mountain. Very quickly, they came to a stop at a sword-shaped mountain peak that pierced through the clouds.

This mountain was about five to six thousand meters high and towered into the clouds above. People’s eyes were unable to take in the entire view, and an endless sea of clouds blocked anyone from seeing what was above the clouds.

The mountain peak itself wasn’t very large at about a hundred or so meters tall. However, the top part of the mountain peak seemed as if a sword from the heavens had bisected the peak in two. Thus, the mountain peak was a piece of flat ground without any uneven surfaces.

At the top of the mountain peak, there was a single lonely house that was established there. Enduring the howling winds for years on end, this house seemed quite lonely and desolate to Jian Chen.

“Elder ancestor, the honored guest has been brought.” The patriarch bowed respectfully toward the little house.

“Jian Chen, enter!” An elderly voice called out from within.

Jian Chen cupped his hands before entering the house without hesitation. The patriarch hadn’t any plans to stay and turned around to immediately leave the mountain peak.

Jian Chen walked straight in through the doors of the wooden house. The house was rather small, and there were no decorations within it. The very moment Jian Chen walked in, he could see a white-robed elder inside.

The elder had his white hair coiled around his head with a wooden hairpin stuck through it. Seeming quite experienced, his two legs were crossed over a jade stone while his hands were at his abdomen. There was a faint smile on his face, giving him the distinct spirit of an immortal.

# Chapter 517: Plight Of The Huang Family

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“This one is Jian Chen, I pay my respects to senior!” Jian Chen bowed down to his waist with the utmost respect. This was a Saint Ruler standing in front of him after all.

The eyes to the ancestor of the Huang family were sparkling bright like the moon. As if capable of staring into the center of Jian Chen’s heart, his eyes studied Jian Chen with a faint smile and a nod of his head.

Welcoming the gaze of the patriarch, Jian Chen suddenly felt as if his entire body was being analyzed and understood by him. In front of the patriarch, Jian Chen may as well have been without clothes or any other object, as nothing was a secret to the patriarch’s eyes.

The light in the patriarch’s eyes quickly receded back into an ordinary one. Spearheading forward with conversation, the patriarch praised Jian Chen, “You deserve to be called a man of character and astronomical talent. Not only were you able to breakthrough to the Heaven Saint Master realm at your age, you are also not too prideful, not too impatient, and steady as a mountain. To be able to accomplish so much in so little time is very difficult. It is no wonder the Qinhuang Kingdom was so easily willing and confident to let such a youngster take up the mantle of an Imperial Protector. Not only did they see your talent, they saw your personal character and conduct.”

The ancestor’s words caused Jian Chen to be astonished. Even with the high importance Jian Chen had placed on the strength of

a Saint Ruler, he did not expect to have his entire strength be seen through with just his eyes. That strength was too terrifying. Subsequently, Jian Chen felt worried and unsure if the Saint Ruler would be able to see through the secret that he had no Saint Weapon and the existence of the azure and violet Sword Spirits.

When he looked at the ancestor's expression, Jian Chen relaxed a bit. That was because the ancestor clearly did not look as though he had seen through everything from Jian Chen. Otherwise, if he knew that Jian Chen had such an unbelievable amount of strength without a Saint Weapon, then even a Saint Ruler wouldn't help but feel shocked and would be unable to maintain a calm face like the one he had now.

Because the destruction of a Saint Weapon meant either death or becoming a cripple for a person. This was considered to be an uncontroversial fact, but Jian Chen was a deviation from this.

“This one feels quite accomplished with the amount of praise from senior. I am not as outstanding as senior says, in comparison, this one is nothing and not worth so much praise.” Jian Chen cupped his hands together. Although there was a smile on his face, he was neither servile nor overbearing.

Hearing this, the ancestor laughed and stroked the beard under his chin with a gentle hand. “This old man was only able to get to where I am today after spending 1300 years worth of time. If I think back to when this old man was your age, I was still dithering around the boundary to become an Earth Saint Master, but I was still not quite there. Compared to you, it is this old man's achievements that are not worth mentioning. If you cultivate for

as long as this old man, then you will definitely reach past this old man. At the very least, you will become an entity a layer higher than a Saint Ruler.”

Jian Chen had no look of arrogance on his face. Having the memories of two lives, he had experienced many things that had honed him. With the great waves and tremendous winds, Jian Chen had lingered between the realms of Yin and Yang. Compared to the children born and raised within the greenhouse-like family to mature, Jian Chen was completely different. He had long since been mentally fortified by his experiences.

“Senior likes to joke I see. The events in the future cannot be so easily dictated by anyone. Although I have several achievements now, the path for the future is still to be taken slowly. One cannot say for certain that this one will reach the world senior lives in, or if this one will die on the way there.” Jian Chen spoke calmly.

Hearing this, the ancestor nodded his head in approval. “Your words have merit to them. There are many people on the Tian Yuan Continent, and there are just as many outstanding geniuses. Even among these talents, only a few of them actually become successful. Plenty of them lose their lives on the way or in the cradle of success.”

The ancestor suddenly stopped speaking to glance impassively at Jian Chen, but there was a faint smile on his face, “Well then, let us dispense all of the pleasantries. Jian Chen, do you know why I called you here today?”

“Forgive this one for his ignorance. Please, if the ancestor could



enlighten me!” Jian Chen spoke.

The ancestor stood up, “This house is actually quite too small for this. Let us walk outside to speak.” With that, the ancestor walked out from his wooden house.

Jian Chen walked out from the house only to realize that a transparent barrier had somehow been erected in the surrounding area around the mountain peak. The entire mountain peak was enclosed inside so that the howling winds would have no effect on the people inside.

Not too far away, the earth element had begun to gather and form a stone table in front of them. The ancestor could be seen already seated on a stone stool.

“Come, sit!” The ancestor gestured to Jian Chen.

Jian Chen didn’t hesitate to sit down at the table.

The ancestor took out two wine cups and a jade bottle from his Space Ring before pouring a cup for Jian Chen. “This old man has erected a barrier over this area. Not only will our conversation be unheard from the outside, this entire interior will be invisible as well.”

Jian Chen knew that the ancestor of the Huang family would begin to talk about a serious point and grew extremely solemn himself. But before he could even open his mouth to speak, the

ancestor had already beaten him to the punch.

“Jian Chen, this old man invited you here today to primarily talk about a matter of business with the Qinhuang Kingdom. Since you are an Imperial Protector for them, your status is even higher than that of the king, you represent the Qinhuang Kingdom.” He spoke.

Pondering, Jian Chen asked, “What sort of business might senior be talking about?”

The ancestor did not reply right away. He instead took a sip of his wine. After a small while, he finally continued, “Jian Chen, this old man does not enjoy beating around the bush, so I’ll speak honestly. Our Huang family wishes to ally ourselves with the Qinhuang Kingdom. If the Qinhuang Kingdom is able to help us survive something, then our Huang family will never be able to thank the Qinhuang Kingdom enough.”

“Senior, would it be possible to tell us just what circumstances the Huang family is in. Is it related to the Shi family?” Jian chen asked.

The ancestor shook his head, “If it was the Shi family, then our Huang family wouldn’t be forced back in such a manner. This time it is because of the Hongfu clan.”

“Hongfu clan? Senior, could this Hongfu clan be even stronger than the Shi family?” Jian Chen spoke with a newfound interest.

The ancestor nodded his head, “Correct. To be specific, the Hongfu clan is several times stronger than the Shi family. That is because in their clan, they have two Saint Rulers and two Ruler Armaments!”

“What!? Two Saint Rulers!” Jian Chen was dumbfounded. On the Tian Yuan Continent, a clan that had one Saint Ruler was already considered one of the best clans, but the Hongfu clan had actually two Saint Rulers. Their strength wasn’t too far off from the Sect of Dragon and Tiger.

Seeing the shocked look on Jian Chen’s face, the ancestor of the Huang family gave a reassuring smile, “Jian Chen, you needn’t worry. While the Hongfu clan has two Saint Rulers, their strengths lie upon the Second and Third Layer. Even if they both wielded Ruler Armaments, this old man could handle the both of them alone.

Jian Chen was shocked once again. He looked at the ancestor with a newfound light in his eyes. If he could go against two Saint Rulers wielding Ruler Armaments by himself, then just what level of strength had this ancestor reached? The Fourth Layer? He had to at least be at the Fourth Layer.

The ancestor continued to speak, “The grievances between our Huang family and the Hongfu clan have long since reached a point of no return. They had started several thousand years ago, and up to even now, our Huang family and their Hongfu clan have been at equivalent strengths almost. Even now, our two families would suffer tremendous losses if we were to fight now. Thus, there has never been any conflicts between our two sides, but in private,

there have been countless clashes that occur on a frequent basis. Even this old man has fought several times with the two Saint Ruler, but it has never been so serious yet.”

“A few years ago, the Hongfu clan and another family began to get close. In addition to having the Yan family draw close to them by use of marriage, they begun to treat our Huang family even more threateningly. Just faintly, they have already started to bring us closer to a battle to the death through an ever increasing amount of pressure. This was the reason why the offspring of my Huang family had entered the empty space without a barrier during the Gathering of the Mercenaries. This old man did not use any energy so I could conserve as much energy as I could in the case that the Hongfu clan and Yan family made a surprise attack.”

“What this old man didn’t think of was the fact that while my Huang family was minding their own business, the Shi family would suddenly attack our Huang family. They tried to steal away the Ruler Armament in our possession, and although this old man has no way to forcibly recall the Ruler Armament, it would cost some of my vital energy to reclaim it. Without a Ruler Armament, if the Hongfu clan and Yan family unleashed a surprise attack, even I would not be able to stop their alliance. From this, I can only imagine that if the Shi family did not get roped in by the Hongfu clan, then they had at least reached a secret agreement with each other.”

The ancestor’s face looked helpless. With a sigh, he spoke, “The combination of the Hongfu clan and Yan family is already a considerable amount of pressure to my Huang family. With the added Shi family, my Huang family would have no power to defend ourselves if they all attacked together. Thus, my Huang

family is desperately looking for an outside power to assist us.”

Hearing this, Jian Chen felt a headache occur. The Huang family was certainly facing an unhappy situation. The Hongfu clan had two Saint Rulers that the ancestor of the Huang family was still able to fend off with difficulty. With the Yan and Shi family participating, there would be another two Saint Rulers added to the mix as enemies. With the ancestor by himself, he was clearly no match for the four.

Jian Chen was extremely clear on the motive for the ancestor wishing for an alliance with the Qinhuang Kingdom. There was nothing else but his desire to borrow the power of the Qinhuang Kingdom to stabilize his Huang family.

Jian Chen hesitated for a moment. “Senior, this is quite the important manner. Please forgive this one for not being the one to give a response.” Jian Chen really didn’t dare give a response to something like this. If he did, then it would be very possible that the Qinhuang Kingdom would earn another two strong enemies. Although the Qinhuang Kingdom had four Saint Rulers, two enemy Saint Rulers was still quite a foe to the kingdom.

Furthermore, there had been a sour taste left in Jian Chen’s mouth after the events with the Sect of Dragon and Tiger. To him, the two Saint Rulers of the Qinhuang Kingdom had personally come to fight with the Saint Ruler from the Sect of Dragon and Tiger. Even if the Saint Ruler from the Sect of Dragon and Tiger didn’t fight, he would have to pay a very hefty price, but the final conclusion had been completely outside of Jian Chen’s expectations. Not only did no fight occur, the two Saint Rulers

from the Qinhuang Kingdom had unexpectedly left with such serious expressions. This had made Jian Chen uneasy and slightly concerned in his heart. Although he didn't know what the elder sectmaster had said to the two Saint Rulers, it surely had to do with the Qinhuang Kingdom if it had stopped the two of them dead in their tracks.

Thus, at this crucial moment, Jian Chen wasn't willing to make the Qinhuang Kingdom a lightning rod for additional troubles.

# Chapter 518: The True Strength Of A Saint Ruler

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With Jian Chen declining to represent the Qinhuang Kingdom in a decision to ally with the Huang family, the ancestor of the Huang family sighed. He had not felt this was an unexpected decision; he even predicted that Jian Chen would decline. Prior to this, he had been clinging onto that sliver of hope, but now, Jian Chen had essentially extinguished the final piece of hope in the ancestor's heart.

“Senior, I am truly apologetic. This matter involves far too many players for me to make a decision.” Jian Chen spoke apologetically. From the ancestor's face, Jian Chen could see that the ancestor's shoulders were heavily weighed down by the pressure about his Huang family.

“This old man can understand your troubles. The Qinhuang Kingdom is one of the Eight Great Powers, but they cannot belittle any single Saint Ruler level expert like so. Even more so, they cannot offend four Saint Rulers at the same time. If it were me that stood in your shoes, I wouldn't agree either.” The ancestor sighed.

Jian Chen hesitated for a moment, “Senior, although I cannot involve the Qinhuang Kingdom in this myself, if there is ever something I can do, then I will do my best to help the Huang family.”

Jian Chen had been honest and wasn't lying for the sake of face, so the ancestor felt moved. Smiling, he said, “Jian Chen, this old man understands your intent. A fight between Saint Rulers is

something a Heaven Saint Master cannot interfere with. Even with your excellent talent as one of the strongest on the continent, you wouldn't be an exception to this. If you work hard and cultivate, in the future you will definitely exceed this old man. Thus, you should do your best to increase your strength. When you become a Saint Ruler, we will see if my Huang family will still need your help or not."

Still hesitating, Jian Chen replied, "Senior, this one knows that an individual at the Saint Ruler realm is extremely strong. Back at the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, I was educated on the very tip of the iceberg of a Saint Ruler's strength, but the clear level of it is still quite fuzzy to me. This one wonders if senior would be able to allow me to experience a Saint Ruler's strength. This one would like to try his best to see just how big of a gap there is between me and a Saint Ruler and if I can defend myself from one."

The reason why Jian Chen had said these words was simply to increase his knowledge on the strength of a Saint Ruler. The Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger had already expressed his interest in the Origin energy of the azure and violet Sword Spirits. The Saint Ruler was afraid of Jian Chen's identity as an Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom, but this did not mean he was not afraid to act in secret against Jian Chen. As long as he could clearly understand the exact strength of a Saint Ruler, then Jian Chen would be able to find a plan to deal with a Saint Ruler should one attack him in the future.

"Jian Chen, the difference between a Saint Ruler and a Heaven Saint Master is even further than you can imagine. A Saint Ruler has already understood the mysteries of the world to the point where each movement they take embodies the energy of the world.



As the proverbs say: all are ants beneath a Saint Ruler. In front of a Saint Ruler, a Heaven Saint Master is indeed as weak as an ant. If you truly wish to see a Saint Ruler's strength, then this old man will let you satisfy your curiosity." The ancestor spoke. At the last word, a barrier suddenly appeared and imprisoned Jian Chen within it.

"Jian Chen, this is the barrier that only a Saint Ruler can create. Containing the laws of the world, it is connected with the world itself intrinsically. One can say the interior of this barrier is an entirely different space. Although a barrier is unbearably weak toward another Saint Ruler, even a Heaven Saint Master is unable to break through this. Aside from the power of the barrier being depleted, a Heaven Saint Master has no chance of shattering it." The ancestor spoke.

The ancestor's words had clearly entered Jian Chen's ears, but even after hearing them, Jian Chen had remained unconvinced and immediately brought out the Origin energy of the Sword Spirits. A rich amount of an azure and violet glow could be seen gathering and condensing into the form of a sword before Jian Chen chopped down at the barrier.

"It's no use. This old man's barrier is something that a Heaven Saint Master cannot shatter apart by himself unless the barrier runs out of power. This barrier is the energy of another domain, one that a Heaven Saint Master cannot even think of touching." The ancestor smiled faintly, completely sure that Jian Chen would not be able to split apart the barrier he had personally put down.

At that moment, the Origin energy made contact with the

barrier. With a “pop!” sound, the barrier was popped by Jian Chen’s sword as if it had been a giant balloon filled with air. After the sword had pricked through it, the barrier completely disappeared from sight.

The expression of the ancestor immediately went rigid. Staring blankly at where the barrier had dissipated, a look of disbelief crossed his face.

“Impossible, you actually broke the barrier I put down!” The ancestor spoke with a rather crestfallen and shocked voice.

He quickly recovered himself however. Staring curiously at the Origin energy in Jian Chen’s hand, he exclaimed, “What a powerful energy.”

Seeing the expression on the ancestor’s face, Jian Chen couldn’t help but have a small smile on his face. Cupping his hands, he spoke, “Senior, please advise me!”

Standing up from his stone stool, the ancestor’s eyes began to sparkle with a bright light. Firmly, he spoke to Jian Chen, “Jian Chen, a barrier is just one of the many tools of a Saint Ruler, but it is not a part of a Saint Ruler’s attacking strength. Right now I will show you the difference between a Saint Ruler and Heaven Saint Master, you may attack as you please.”

Separating himself from the stone table, Jian Chen’s right hand began to sparkle with an even brighter light of azure and violet from the Origin energy. As if two serpents or Yin Yang fish, they

coiled around his arm, but they never touched one another.

Concentrating heavily on the Saint Ruler in front of him, Jian Chen had no intention to hold back. All of the Origin energy within his body had been brought out to its maximum amount. His right hand began to shake violently as the amount of power coursing through his arm had transformed it into a blur of mirror images that shot toward the ancestor with blinding speed.

With only a flash of azure and violet, the Origin energy reached three inches to the Saint Ruler's chest before stopping. The Origin energy found itself unable to advance another fraction of an inch forward.

Jian Chen blanched in surprise. His feet slid forward in an attempt to use his entire strength to push the Origin energy forward, but he was powerless despite his attempts. The Origin energy was simply unable to go even a small inch forward.

Jian Chen's eyes flashed as he decided to take back his sword. With a flickering of his body, he circled around the ancestor's body to attack from the back, but the results had been the same. The Origin energy stopped moving three inches away from the ancestor's body, it was unable to progress anymore.

"Just what in the world is this?" Jian Chen was extremely curious. This was the very first time he had seen the methods of a Saint Ruler, but even now, Jian Chen was unable to understand it.

"Jian Chen, you now understand just how large of a difference

there is between a Heaven Saint Master and a Saint Ruler. Even if a Saint Ruler remains motionless, there is nothing a Heaven Saint Master can do to injure them.” The ancestor chuckled.

“Senior, would it be possible to tell me how you managed to do this?” Although he was unable to harm the ancestor at all, Jian Chen was not discouraged and even asked a question with some curiosity.

The ancestor turned around to teach and explain to Jian Chen with a smile, “That is the mystery of space!”

“Mystery of space?” Jian Chen murmured to himself in a low voice. His eyebrows furrowed together in deep thought.

The ancestor continued to explain, “A Heaven Saint Master can control the energy of the world in ways that can enable them to fly through the air. A Saint Ruler has comprehended the mysteries of the world can initially use the energy of space. I was using this spatial energy just then.”

“In the eyes of others, you are only three inches away from hitting me, but what you may not know is that in the eyes of an observer of these three inches, they are actually comprised of several kilometers. Depending on the level of comprehension on space by a Saint Ruler, this distance can be infinitesimally extended. Unless you can transverse this space or perhaps break through this space, there is no way you can harm an entity of a Saint Ruler.”

“Space, so this is the energy of space.” Jian Chen made a realization. His understanding of a Saint Ruler had increased even more now. Space was a gap that was still too far for him to cross just yet.

“You understand the distance between a Heaven Saint Master and a Saint Ruler now I take it?” The ancestor spoke in a teacherly manner toward Jian Chen.

“I understand now. The mysteries of the world are indeed massive if they can control even space itself. With that, how wouldn’t a Saint Ruler be able to fly at a tremendous speed?” Jian Chen’s face had grown serious as he spoke.

“Correct!” The ancestor replied, “A Saint Ruler who has just comprehended the mystery of space is indeed fast. For an individual with a deeper understanding of it, a single step of theirs can transverse several thousand kilometers. In today’s time, there are only a handful of men who are capable of this.”

Jian Chen’s eyebrows knit together tightly. He thought about that Saint Ruler from the Sect of Dragon and Tiger; if the speed of a Saint Ruler was that fast, then it would be fruitless to even attempt to run away from one. Although Jian Chen wasn’t sure if the Saint Ruler from the Sect of Dragon and Tiger would attack him, he couldn’t lower his guard — he had to remain wary.

Afterward, Jian Chen and the ancestor began to chat before Jian Chen finally left the mountain peak to go back to the villa by himself.

“Fourth master, you’ve returned so quickly!” As soon as Jian Chen descended down into the villa, the two elders Feng and Yun flew up to receive him as if they were all good friends.

Jian Chen smiled. “This one and the ancestor have already finished our talks and now it is time for me to return to the Gesun Kingdom. Many thanks to the two seniors and the Huang family for having me.”

Hearing this, the two elders gave each other a look — concern could be seen as wrinkles across their foreheads. Elder Feng spoke, “Fourth master, why leave so quickly? Come stay awhile!”

“There is no other choice, I have a group of friends waiting for me back home. I cannot just so blatantly leave them all on the side. There is still some matters I need to take care of with them.”

“Fourth master, it is seldom that you come by the Huang family, why not first see the young miss?” Elder Feng spoke.

Jian Chen hesitated as the memories of his days with Huang Luan suddenly appeared in his mind. He hadn’t seen her in a long time, so there was willingness to see her again.

“Fine then. It is indeed rare to come by here, I’ll go see miss Huang Luan then.”

## Chapter 519: The Feelings Of Huang'er

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Afterward, elders Feng and Yun led Jian Chen down to the villas of the Huang family without any obstructions. There were many people who recognized the two elders on the way and bowed in respect to them. Clearly, the two of them held quite high positions in the Huang family.

The villas of the Huang family were quite large. The three of them walked side by side with a smile on their faces as well. This sight caused everyone who saw the youth to be quite curious, and they began to guess at Jian Chen's identity.

After walking with the two elders through a villa, the three of them finally reached their destination where a two-story pavilion could be seen.

"Fourth master, this is the chamber of our young miss. She has stipulated that should the fourth master arrive, walking in directly would be fine." Elder Feng gave a meaningful stare and smile while elder Yun stood on the other side with a similar expression.

Jian Chen stared at the pavilion in front of him without paying attention to the expressions on both elders faces. After a slight moment of hesitation, he finally stepped toward the door. Pushing it open, Jian Chen then walked into the building.

The first floor of the pavilion was a very expansive lounge. Despite it being spotlessly clean, it was vacant and devoid of any single person, but at the end of the lounge was a wooden staircase

that led to the second floor.

Hesitating again, Jian Chen slowly stepped toward the staircase and up to the second floor. Upon his arrival, a sweet-smelling scent wafted into his nose. Breathing in, he suddenly felt like he was intoxicated and had his mind stripped away from him. This was a scent that would make you indulge yourself without restraint.

Jian Chen took in a deep breath of the fragrant air, and after taking it in, he couldn't help but sigh, "What an enchanting scent!"

Jian Chen had not spoken out loud, but in this quiet pavilion, it may as well be a clap of thunder that no one would be able to ignore.

Jian Chen studied his environment only to find that this room had been decorated with comfort in mind. The interior wasn't grand in appearance, but there were several things that a woman would own and plenty of beautiful decorations in the room. It was enough for anyone that had come here for the first time to be able to make an accurate guess that the owner of this room was a female.

In the center of the room, there was a neat and tidy bed. This bed was quite small and was only capable of holding one person on it to sleep on. On the yellow bed was a yellow blanket that had been folded several times with all sorts of marks left behind. It was clear to see that this bed had not been touched for some time.

To the side of the bed was a single window. At this moment,



there was a woman whose back quietly faced Jian Chen as she stared out the window. As if spellbound, this woman stared at the scenery outside the window. She wore a black dress with her black hair drooped down. This combination of clothes and appearance had harmonized with each other perfectly, inducing a feeling of grace. Although her face could not be seen, her beautiful stature was more than enough for anyone to guess that the face of the owner would be beautiful as well.

Jian Chen's eyes fixed themselves onto the back of this woman. Although he wasn't able to see her face, the figure was quite familiar to him, and his mind had already seemed to have made a verdict on who this woman was — it was Huang Luan, who he hadn't seen in a very long time.

Staring quietly at Huang Luan's back, Jian Chen's lips couldn't help but curl into a smile. That was because he had suddenly thought about the first time he and Huang Luan had met.

“Miss Huang Luan, it has been a long time since we last saw each other. Compared to then, you have more grace now it seems.” Jian Chen spoke with a smile still on his face.

Hearing this, Huang Luan's black dress wearing figure began to tremble. Her teeth began to nibble at her lower lip in hesitation before seemingly coming to a conclusion. Finally, she turned around slowly. She looked to Jian Chen's handsome face with a complex look of happiness.

It had been more than half a year since they had last met, and Huang Luan's beauty had indeed grown since then. Her beauty

now was still capable of befalling a kingdom and left no room for argument. Even the fish and the birds would be captivated by her, and the moon would hide itself behind the clouds in shame.

Huang Luan's limpid autumn eyes stared at Jian Chen as if lost in thought. Her mouth slowly opened as she asked, "Should I be calling you Jian Chen or Changyang Xiangtian?"

Smiling confidently, Jian Chen replied, "Just call me Jian Chen. I rather like that name. The name 'Changyang Xiangtian' is something only my family uses. Besides my family, I am Jian Chen!"

Huang Luan took several light steps toward Jian Chen at her leisure. At an extremely close range, her eyes were still full of complexity. Even now, in her mind, Huang Luan was unable to even think back to when she and Jian Chen had first met or when they had met again in the empty space during the Gathering of the Mercenaries.

This was the very first time Jian Chen had ever seen Huang Luan have such a look in her eyes. Sensing that something was off, he gave an awkward smile, "Miss Huang Luan, are you alright!?"

As soon as Jian Chen had finished speaking, Huang Luan had abruptly spread open her arms to hug Jian Chen. Her entire body stuck close to him. Her slender but exceptionally powerful arms had already pulled Jian Chen close to her.

This sudden development had startled Jian Chen so much that he

became mute with shock. For a half-moment, Jian Chen hadn't responded to her. As far as he knew, even though he and Huang Luan had gone through a period of trouble together, the relationship between the two had never reached such a close and intimate level like this.

When Jian Chen had finally recollected himself, he could feel the lovely but tightly-clenched arms of Huang Luan still wrapped around his body. His thoughts had instantly descended into chaos — with Huang Luan suddenly hugging him like this, the mentally unprepared Jian Chen was at a loss for what to do or what would happen next.

“Miss Huang Luan... th-this...” Jian Chen swallowed. Even though he wanted to say something, he suddenly found himself unable to say anything. It was the two soft but firm sensations he felt pressed against his chest that made Jian Chen's heart beat with an unprecedented level of violetness.

“Jian Chen, I wanted to hug you, so let me hug you for a while, okay?” Huang Luan's voice could be heard right next to his ears. Like the soft hum of a mosquito, her sweet-sounding voice gently blew by Jian Chen's ear, allowing him to feel his ear go both numb and ticklish.

Jian Chen sucked in a deep breath in an attempt to forcibly calm down. Gathering his thoughts, he finally managed to ask, “Miss Huang Luan. Just... what is the meaning of this?”

This time, there was no response from Huang Luan, who instead chose to continue hugging Jian Chen tightly. Her entire body

seemed as if it was stuck to him; her head was next to Jian Chen's shoulder, and both of her eyes were closed shut. Her entire state of mind had descended into a wondrous sensation she had never experienced before. Quietly enjoying this sensation of the mind and soul, her mind was filled with joy.

Right now, in her mind, Huang Luan was replaying the scene from when she had first met Jian Chen.

She remembered, that time the two of them had once shared...

“You scoundrel, to think that you would peek at me taking a bath, I will definitely kill you!”

“Hold on, miss! This was just a misunderstanding, I had no intentions of peeking on the miss taking a bath...”

.....

She remembered, that time in the empty space during the Gathering of the Mercenaries...

“Bastard, if you're a man, don't even think about running away...”

“I don't wish to stand around to be your live shooting target, I'm not that foolish...”

.....

She remembered, that time when they fought against Shi Xiangran...

“Scoundrel! If you help me deal with them, I’ll write off our differences!”

.....

She remembered, that time when Jian Chen had been crushed by Shi Xiangran’s Seal of Treasure Mountain.

“You scoundrel, how could you be this stupid? I told you to run, but you stood there like an idiot. An idiot’s death! That’s what you deserve...”

.....

She remembered, that time when they were about to go on their own separate ways...

“Did you not want to know my name?”

“You never told me, how would I know it?”

“Did it not occur to you to ask?”

Even now, she could clearly remember these memories. Her own heart felt as if she had lost something when she had first parted from Jian Chen. At the same time, she had felt happy when Jian Chen had been with her.

At that time, Huang Luan remembered how she had first felt about this person. Truly, she hated him to the bone. She wanted nothing more than to scalp his skin, tear his muscles, drink his blood, and eat his flesh. At that time, her body had been seen by this man, a man that was both very weak and a stranger. Huang Luan had been left with a very deep impression of Jian Chen for that reason. It was only when she returned to the villa that she had brooded over her feelings and tried to forget that it had ever happened. However, the feelings she had for Jian Chen had only made her feel even more hurt.

Later, when she participated in the Gathering of the Mercenaries, she had came across Jian Chen once again in the empty space by chance. Although Jian Chen's sudden explosion of strength had startled her, she still felt some animosity for him. This animosity had permeated her entire body down to her bones; it hadn't been alleviated since her first meeting with him, that was why the two of them had started to fight.

However, when Shi Xiangran had attacked her, she had fallen into a predicament. At that moment, she had no other choice but to cry for help to Jian Chen for the sake of protecting her Ruler Armament. Though she didn't believe that Jian Chen would help her from her problem, and escape was hopeless for her since there had been many experts aligned with Shi Xiangran. With no other option to choose from, she could only resign herself to feeding the

dead horse some medicine.

However, despite the injuries Jian Chen had, his fighting strength had been overwhelming and far beyond her expectations. Not only did he defend himself, he was able to kill the Earth Saint Masters with Shi Xiangran and reduce the pressure on her. Then, they had even managed to escape from that predicament with the two of them uniting to defend themselves from Shi Xiangran.

After these series of events, Huang Luan's perspective of Jian Chen had begun to change bit by bit. The two of them had no other choice but to stay with one another until the tournament had ended after they scraped together their strength to fight Shi Xiangran,.

In this period of contact with Jian Chen, Huang Luan's understanding of him had grown deeper and deeper. Whether it was his influence, his appearance, or even his moral character, she was not too picky to find fault in any of them. He was even strong as well. His good attributes slowly had Huang Luan changing her mind about Jian Chen, and she gradually threw away the hatred she felt for him. Especially since that first awkward meeting was really just a coincidence.

Jian Chen possessed a handsome charm that could sway any woman under the heavens. Combined with confident and free nature of his, his supertalent, the amount of power he was endowed with, that made him brave, and his intelligence in the face of any enemy strike, all of these superior qualities of his gave him an unbelievable allure. He could even be said to be the shining white knight of any woman on the continent.

When she had thrown away the prejudice she felt toward Jian Chen, she discovered all of his strong points when they were traveling together. Unbeknownst to her, Jian Chen had left a deep imprint in her mind.

It was during that time that Huang Luan had felt something murky in her mind. From then to the time where she had split with Jian Chen after the Gathering of the Mercenaries, this murky sensation had gradually grown clear in her mind. When she had returned to the villa this particular feeling had grown extremely fierce. In the end, this line of thought had seized control of her thinking had begun to replay memories of when she was with Jian Chen frequently.

This feeling hadn't been lost even after she had split ways with Jian Chen. Instead, it had been like a poison that spread through her body. It reached deeper and became even more serious to the point where she could no longer free herself from her thoughts.



# Chapter 520: Determination

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Huang Luan held Jian Chen tightly in a quiet but comforting embrace. No words had been voiced, but the feelings and thoughts that had welled up inside her had finally exploded out. Just like a volcano erupting after a period of buildup, the resulting momentum was both fierce and hard to control.

Jian Chen was dumbstruck. His entire body had gone rigid without moving for a long period of time. Even with memories from two worlds, he never remembered being hugged by a female before, so this was the very first time he had experienced the warmth of one.

This was not a woman with a beauty that could bring the downfall of a city, but a woman with a beauty that could bring an entire kingdom to its knees.

Time in this dubiously quiet place slowly passed by. A beautiful moment was fleeting; this one was no exception.

Huang Luan and Jian Chen had remained together for an unknown amount of time before Huang Luan finally loosened her grip on Jian Chen. Slowly standing up, Huang Luan looked up at Jian Chen with her bashful eyes. Then, tilting her head down, she slowly began to smooth out the wrinkles in her messy robes. Both of her cheeks had gone red in the prominent display of a shy girl.

This appearance of hers caused Jian Chen to be dumbfounded. From the very beginning of when he came to know Huang Luan,

she had given Jian Chen the feeling of being icy-cold and habitually silent. There was never a time where she had revealed such a shy expression.

“Is this the same Huang Luan I first came to know?” Jian Chen couldn’t help but question himself. In his mind, the Huang Luan he knew and the one in front of him were two completely different people.

Jian Chen sucked in a deep breath and was hit with the sweet-smelling fragrance coming from Huang Luan’s body once more. His entire mind had been intoxicated by it, this scent combined with her throwing her arms around him was as good as a bewitching medicine concocted against a man. If it were not for Jian Chen being a Heaven Saint Master with impressive willpower and an impressive mind, it would be very likely that he would have lost all self-control.

Slowly bringing himself back to a calm, Jian Chen stared at Huang Luan with a complex stare. Hesitantly, he opened his mouth to ask, “Miss Huang Luan, are you alright?”

Huang Luan shook her head slightly and slowly brought her head up to look at Jian Chen. After a brief period of time, the expression on her face finally returned to normal. Although there was still the remains of a blush on her cheeks, it enhanced her charm.

Seeing the handsome and stalwart face of Jian Chen, Huang Luan’s eyes gradually reverted back to a blur. A face like his was like receiving an increased dosage of Yang qi after half a year of not having any.

Jian Chen felt goosebumps arise on his skin from Huang Luan's stare. Unconsciously, he retreated several steps as if he was afraid of this look. Jian Chen wasn't a naive three year old, he knew just what that stare meant in Huang Luan's eyes. This stare left him with an extreme amount of trouble in his heart. He was already shouldering plenty of worries. Although it seemed that Jian Chen was a person with a far future, he was still just a Heaven Saint Master in strength while also being an Imperial Protector for the Qinhuang Kingdom. Jian Chen was fully aware of how much pressure the future had in store for him, so today, he wanted to spend all of his efforts on improving his own strength. There was simply no time to even think about settling down.

"Jian Chen. From our departure in Mercenary City to now half a year later, have you thought about me?" Huang Luan whispered to Jian Chen with a soft voice. Right now in terms of emotions, Huang Luan was far more honest than before. She was no longer the secretive, daredevil, and heroine figure from before. Compared to You Yue, they were as different as black and white in personality.

"Eh..." Jian Chen hadn't thought that Huang Luan would actually ask a question like this. In his period of distraction, Huang Luan's temperament suddenly flared up in way that Jian Chen felt contrasted quite heavily with her usual icy expression.

Jian Chen quickly recovered, and still slightly stupefied, he answered, "I have!"

Hearing this, Huang Luan's face broke into a happy smile.

Unknown to her, Jian Chen's thoughts of her had been completely different than how she had thought of him. When Jian Chen had said that he had thought of her, he had only thought of the occasional times where he thought of the past, but there was no longing in them.

Yet, this smile of Huang Luan did not last long. Her face quickly grew dark; a concentrated amount of sadness and worry mixed into it.

Seeing this expression of hers, Jian Chen disregarded the abnormality of Huang Luan's previous actions. Jian Chen's heart dropped, he could already tell that Huang Luan had perhaps come across some sort of trouble.

"Miss Huang Luan, are you fine?" Jian Chen asked again. When Huang Luan had first hugged Jian Chen, he had a strange feeling in his heart. Now this worried expression of Huang Luan had brought him to an indescribable level of anxiety. Right now, Jian Chen himself wasn't sure if this anxiety was because of Huang Luan or not.

Huang Luan's reluctant eyes lingered on Jian Chen's handsome face and the chest she had buried herself against. With a soft sigh, she slowly turned back to the windows so she could stare out of it with a look of despair.

During the split second Huang Luan had turned around, Jian Chen had caught a glimpse of a teardrop beginning to fall from Huang Luan's eyes.

Jian Chen's heart had immediately grown heavy for some reason. He didn't know why, but the sight of Huang Luan caused his own heart to hurt. Just faintly, he could sense that something terrible had happened to Huang Luan.

After a long while, Huang Luan finally opened her mouth, "Jian Chen. Did you know, my father has already betrothed me to the second young master of the Huanggu clan." Huang Luan's voice was weak and without strength. Pain was easy to detect in her voice, and just a slight sob could be heard as well.

Jian Chen was startled to hear this. Although not a single woman had ever crashed their way into Jian Chen's mind before, Jian Chen's heart couldn't help but grow heavy when he heard Huang Luan speak. Perhaps it was because of Huang Luan's current state, but Jian Chen's heart had begun to bubble with a strange sensation. He certainly did not wish for a beautiful woman to be betrothed to a man she did not love.

Restraining the emotions in his mind, Jian Chen asked, "Huanggu clan? Could this be another strong clan that can rival your Huang family in strength?"

"The Huanggu clan is incomparably strong in comparison to my Huang family. The Huanggu clan is a family that has stayed in isolation similar to my Huang family, the Shi family, the Jiede clan, and the Dugu family. Families that have stayed in isolation like ours have several thousand years worth of history like a Saint Ruler appearing from the family. They also have unbelievable strength." Huang Luan explained.

“Isolated families? Does that mean every Saint Ruler has come from a clan or family that hid itself away?” Jian Chen asked curiously.

“That’s not it. A family in isolation and a family that isn’t are different. To be called an isolated family is to be in an isolated state and to not have contact with the outside world. Only by doing that can a family be said to be isolated. Our Huang family for example has been stationed deep within the mountains for many years without many of our disciples exploring the outside world. That has led to only a small amount of people knowing who we are. The other isolated families are like this as well.”

“I heard about what happened with the Saint Ruler’s skeleton from uncle Feng and uncle Yun. If it weren’t for the fact that the Qiangnan Kingdom had found and leaked the news of a Saint Ruler’s skeleton to us, our Huang family would never have stepped foot out into the outside world unless it was something important.

“On the outside, there is still many other strong powers that overwhelm those isolated families like mine. For example the Eight Great Powers and the Three Great Empires. There are also the ancient clans whose strength outstrips the isolated families and are a part of everyday life where they are located. Among the isolated families, there are only an extremely small few that can even compare in strength to the Eight Great Powers or the ancient families. As for the Three Great Empires, we are still an era behind. Only the mysterious ancient families would be able to contend with them.”

Jian Chen felt like he was another step closer to understanding the strength of an isolated family after Huang Luan explained it to him. However, he hadn't thought that above these isolated families would be the even more gigantic ancient clans.

“How strong are these ancient clans?” Jian Chen asked curiously.

“You cannot even imagine!” Huang Luan spoke. “I’ve only read about the ancient clans in the ancient records of my Huang family. I’ve never heard anyone talk about them before though, so I only know that these ancient families have existed for tens of thousands of years and more. Although they’ve existed on the continent, no one knows where.”

“The records had it written that unless something major happens on the Tian Yuan Continent, these ancient clans won’t appear at all. That is because they truly are clans that lives in isolation.”

“I had no idea that the waters of the Tian Yuan Continent would be that deep.” Jian Chen spoke. His perspective of the Tian Yuan Continent had changed quite a bit.

Along with the progression of his strength, his domain of understanding had increased as well. In the beginning, he had only been at Wake City to hunt for monster cores to cultivate. A lowly third-rate city where Great Saint Masters were considered far and few and Earth Saint Masters to be the apex of experts with the power to call the wind and summon the rain. As for Heaven Saint Masters, whether it was the Blue Wind Kingdom or the Gesun Kingdom, they were highly respected almost like gods. Heaven Saint Masters represented a kingdom’s strongest source of power,

and in a war, an individual like a Heaven Saint Master was the same as several million elite soldiers.

Now that he had come into contact with a major family like the Huang family, Jian Chen felt as if he had stepped into a whole new domain where the pinnacle of power was no longer a Heaven Saint Master. There was an even higher level — the Saint Rulers who comprehended the mysteries of the world. A Heaven Saint Master was nothing more than a median of strength.

Jian Chen tilted his head down to think, “Miss Huang Luan, I’ve heard of the predicament your Huang family faces from your ancestor. Your betrothment to the Huanggu clan is surely because the Huang family wishes to tie the Huanggu family behind your family banner.”

“Your guess is correct. Although it seems quite calm and quiet on the surface of our family, the core disciples are all aware of how bad the predicament is for our family. If we do not find any outside help, I’m afraid the remaining days for our Huang family will be numbered. The hatred between the Huang and the Hongfu clan has gone on for generations now, there is no other way to resolve this bitter hatred now. From our two families, one of us has to die. With the power of the Hongfu clan, they can control our Huang family now. It is only by uniting with the Huanggu family that we stand a chance against them. They will think twice about attack, and I, I will be offered to the Huanggu family as the only present.” Huang Luan spoke.

Jian Chen had nothing to say after Huang Luan spoke. He just stood there in hesitation for a long time — his eyes sparkled with a



light that seemed like some sort of internal conflict.

After a while, Jian Chen bit his lower lip and finally thought of an idea. “If I am able to find some help for your Huang family, would that be enough for your betrothment to the Huanggu family to be annulled?”

Huang Luan’s body shook violently for a moment before slowly turning to meet Jian Chen. Looking at the earnest face of Jian Chen, Huang Luan’s own face did not have a happy smile on it; instead, there was a helpless and mourning expression.

“Jian Chen, I know that you are the Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom, presumably you have not been one for long either. That means your position within the kingdom is still unstable as well. This betrothment was the proposal of my father and has the support of the ancestor. The two of us alone are unable to do anything, so it is best you not get involved. Otherwise, there will be even more trouble for the Qinhuang Kingdom and the other men of power within the kingdom will no longer agree to let you do as you please.”

Huang Luan’s face had grown helpless beyond helpless. Both eyes looked to Jian Chen with a shallow smile, “Actually, to be able to hug you at this moment and leave behind my fragrance on you is more than enough for me.”

# Chapter 521: 5000 Year Old Saint Ruler

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Jian Chen's eyes gained a determined light to them, "Huang Luan, don't worry. I, Jian Chen, will exhaust my entire efforts to help you. You won't be betrothed to a man you do not love."

Jian Chen's words were firm and decisive. There was resolution in his voice and a strong conviction in himself.

When Huang Luan heard him, her heart immediately felt nice and warm as it pulsed with emotions. In the end, she couldn't help but hug Jian Chen tightly once again. Her entire body began to shake from her spasmodic sobbing. In the silent moment of crying, tears could be seen flowing down her face.

"Jian Chen, I feel satisfied enough with those words. As I thought, I've always been in your heart, haven't I?" Huang Luan spoke through her sobs with a gentle voice filled with emotions.

Jian Chen said nothing and instead chose to hug Huang Luan tightly. This was a problem he found difficult to answer and simply had no time to even ponder it.

Continuing, Huang Luan spoke, "Jian Chen, this union between the Huang family and the Huanggu family cannot be changed. You shouldn't waste your time with this, it's useless. The Qinhuang Kingdom won't be in favor for you to interfere either." Huang Luan's voice was filled with sorrow.

From the touching appearance of the two, it seemed as if they

were a happily married couple on the verge of being broken apart while they tried their best to find a way to resist.

Gently taking Huang Luan's arm off of himself, Jian Chen replied, "The situation has not yet reached a situation where it cannot be saved. Don't worry, I will do my best to help you away from this abyss of suffering. I will go speak with your ancestor."

With that said, Jian Chen wasted no time and turned around to leave Huang Luan's place of residence.

She made no move to stop him either and only stared blankly at the retreating back of Jian Chen. A soft look was in her eyes as tears slowly stole away from her eyelids and trailed down her beautiful face — a face that could bring a kingdom to its knees.

Jian Chen did not stay long at Huang Luan's pavilion. Not even an hour later, he walked out from the pavilion, but the elders Feng and Yun were nowhere to be seen.

A white-robed, middle-aged man had been walking toward Huang Luan's pavilion from far away. When he saw Jian Chen walking out from it, he called out from a long distance away, "You must be the Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom!" The man spoke with a friendly smile and cordial tone.

Jian Chen looked at the middle-aged man; he looked to be an Earth Saint Master in strength, but his imposing presence that brought forth dignity from it overwhelmed the area with his hegemonial air.

Although the man was only an Earth Saint Master in strength, Jian Chen could think of no reason to feel any contempt for him and cupped his hands in greeting instead, “This one is Jian Chen!”

Receiving a polite response from an Imperial Protector like Jian Chen to an Earth Saint Master like him, the middle-aged man showed an approving light in his eyes. The smile on his face grew even warmer as he cupped his hands back in salute, “This one is the family head of the Huang family — Huang Qinglan. Huang’er is my daughter, which brings the topic to mind; it seems Huang’er and the Imperial Protector have quite the history.”

Upon hearing that this middle-aged man was actually Huang Luan’s father, Jian Chen revealed a surprised look in his eyes. Though, he quickly recovered and smiled, “So you are the head of the Huang family, it is nice to meet you!”

“Imperial Protector, the previous representative for the Huang family was my grandfather. When he went into isolation behind the mountains, he was unable to greet you. If we have slighted you, then please forgive us. Allow me to bring you to the Jade Cloud Pavilion, we’ve already prepared a feast for the Imperial Protector. The other five honored guests from the Qinhuang Kingdom are already there, we are just waiting for the Imperial Protector.” Huang Qinglan smiled.

Jian Chen hesitated for a moment before shaking his head, “Lord Huang, this one truly apologizes, but this one has an important matter to discuss with the senior at the top of the mountain peak. For that, I cannot accompany the lord, please forgive me.”

Upon hearing mention of the senior on top of the mountain, Huang Qinglan thought to the ancestor and immediately grew apologetic and venerable, “If it is so, then I won’t delay the Imperial Protector’s time any longer.”

“Goodbye then!” Jian Chen spoke before flying into the air to travel to the mountain.

Seeing Jian Chen disappear into the sky, Huang Qinglan displayed a look of undisguised admiration and envy in his eyes. Muttering to himself, he said, “Who would have known that in so few years, Jian Chen would reach the realm of a Heaven Saint Master. Truly a sight that makes any yearn in envy.”

After speaking his laments, Huang Qinglan continued on his path toward the small pavilion, but when he passed by the spot where Jian Chen had stood, his body came to a halting stop. Sniffing the leftover fragrance in the air, Huang Qinglan suddenly let out a drawn out sigh, “This is the scent of essence of orchid. I did not think that Huang’er would actually be willing to use it for Jian Chen, ai...”

Huang Qinglan displayed a look of helplessness on his face. The essence of orchid was a type of fragrance that wasn’t very well known to the common populace of the Tian Yuan Continent, but the majority of the females knew about it. In the eyes of the females, the essence of orchid was a symbol of pure love, the sacred flower for depicting love. A woman could only use this essence once in her entire life. Using this on the man the woman loved represented that she wholeheartedly fell for him and her

feelings would never change.

When any single woman used this essence on a man, it illustrated the fact that the woman was prepared to give everything she owned to that man, including her chastity.

That was because the essence of orchid was a natural medicine that would confound the senses and evoke the most primal desires of man.

Huang Qinglan never thought she would be willing to use the essence of orchid on him in the short amount of time they knew each other. This was truly out of his expectations.

There was nothing else Huang Qinglan could do but sigh and continue to sigh. Jian Chen was truly a superior candidate. He was such a superior candidate that Huang Qinglan wouldn't even be able to find a fault with him even if he tried. Jian Chen was nearly perfect, but the future of the Huang family was in imminent peril. Therefore Huang Luan had no choice but to be the expendable victim — betrothed to the Huanggu family without any power to choose who she would love.

Huang Qinglan walked into the small pavilion and up to the second floor. The entire room was filled with that essence of orchid, leaving him no choice but to shake his head helplessly. Then, looking to the tear-stained face of his daughter, his heart began to feel unwell.

“Huang’er...” Huang Qinglan opened his mouth. He wanted to

Speak some words of comfort to his daughter, but when he opened his mouth to speak, he realized that there were no words he could say to comfort her.

Using a yellow handkerchief to wipe at her tears, Huang Luan turned her back to face Huang Qinglan, "Father, your daughter wishes to be by herself."

Seeing the icy demeanor of his daughter, Huang Qinglan sighed to himself. "Huang'er, your father knows your heart holds only Jian Chen. You are right, Jian Chen is a superior man in every way to the second master of the Huanggu family except in background. If it were any other time, your father would be happy to have you wed to him, but in this time of peril for the Huang family, you know just as well as I do. This choice we chose was never one we were able to select from."

His daughter said nothing, and the father no longer wished to remain in this orchid-smelling room any longer. "Huang'er, your father doesn't wish to bother you. Do calm yourself well and properly."

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Jian Chen came back to the mountain peak where the ancestor of the Huang family was. Bowing and cupping his hands in front of the wooden house, he spoke, "Senior, this junior has something I wish to discuss for a while."

"Come in!" The ancestor called out calmly from within.

Jian Chen strode into the narrow and simple house. The scholarly old man remained seated on his stone seat with a smile on his face.

“Jian Chen, what might you wish to discuss with this old man? Perhaps you’ve changed your mind and are willing to lend the power of the Qinhuang Kingdom to my Huang family?” The ancestor spoke calmly.

“It seems senior is fond of jokes. This matter is far too important of a decision. This junior cannot represent the Qinhuang Kingdom in such a matter, and even if this junior agreed, the other Imperial Protectors would not agree.” Jian Chen replied.

“Then what is it you’re here for?” The ancestor asked.

“Senior, this junior may not be able to persuade the Qinhuang Kingdom help the Huang family, but if I am able to find another individual to help, I hope that the betrothment of Huang Luan to the Huanggu family can be annulled.” Jian Chen stared seriously at the ancestor. He knew that the man in front of him held unbelievable power and might, but as long as he could convince him, there was a chance for the problem of Huang Luan to be resolved.

The ancestor’s eyebrows rose up in hesitation, “Jian Chen, the betrothment between the Huang and the Huanggu has already been set in stone. The girl Huang Luan has a talent that is seen within my Huang family once every hundred years. She was able to



become an Earth Saint Master at the prime age of twenty. This is a talent that the Huanggu family favors highly. In the past, they've thought of every possible way to arrange for a marriage, so now that one is set in place, the Huanggu family is very happy. Wishing to annul this betrothment is easier said than done, even if we were to do so, the friendship between the two families would be broken."

Jian Chen's face shifted slightly, with some urging, he said, "Senior, then what do you propose needs to be done to absolve this betrothment?"

Seeing the anxious look on Jian Chen's face, the ancestor suddenly broke into a smile, "Jian Chen, could it be that you've come to favor Huang Luan? Do you wish to wed to her instead? If an Imperial Protector from the Qinhuang Kingdom wishes to connect to our Huang family by marriage, this old man would be very happy to do so."

Jian Chen forced out a smile, "Senior, you are still joking around with junior. This is far too major of an issue, the Qinhuang Kingdom will not interfere still."

The ancestor revealed a look of disappointment on his face, "Ai. Jian Chen, this old man will be honest with you. My Huang family and the Huanggu family have a history of several hundred years of friendship with each other. If this marriage were to be unilaterally absolved, it will destroy the connection between both our families. Although you are capable of finding help for my family, I will not act in such a manner still. Unless you are able of finding help capable of rivaling the Qinhuang Kingdom in strength, then I will

not be willing to put my family at such risk.”

Jian Chen hesitated. “Senior, this junior knows not how strong that man is, but he is presumably not far away from the Huanggu family.”

“What layer has this Saint Ruler reached?” The ancestor’s eyes began to gleam in noticeable interest at this topic.

“This junior knows not!” Jian Chen replied innocently.

Hearing this, the ancestor looked disappointed once again. Before he could say anything, Jian Chen’s next words caused his facial expression to freeze.

“This junior does know that that senior has lived for 5000 years as a Saint Ruler.”

“What!? He has been a Saint Ruler for 5000 years!?” The ancestor could no longer hold his calm and came flying up to his feet with a crash of the seat underneath him and a look of shock on his face.

“Correct. 5000 years ago, he became a Saint Ruler!” Jian Chen repeated. This abnormal reaction from the ancestor caused Jian Chen to feel hopeful once again.

The ancestor stared hard at Jian Chen, his voice quivering as he spoke, “Is... is... is he still alive?”

“He is alive and well!” Jian Chen replied.

## Chapter 522: Advent Of Uncle Tian

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The ancestor's face suddenly began to flow with emotions, and the elderly face of the ancestor grew bright-red because of this excitement. It was truly hard to imagine that such a high and mighty Saint Ruler would suddenly lose control of his emotions like so.

“Jian Chen, if... if you can... if you can truly bring this senior to help our Huang family, no matter what request it is that you have, my Huang family will do its best to satisfy you.” The ancestor clasped onto Jian Chen's shoulders with both hands and spoke in an exuberant voice.

“Senior, rest assured. This time, I, Jian Chen will do whatever it takes to invite that man over. When the time comes, I hope that you will rescind the betrothment of Huang Luan.” Jian Chen spoke earnestly.

“No worries, no worries at all. As long as that senior helps my Huang family, then the Huanggu family wouldn't even dare let a fart out after we cancel the betrothment.” The ancestor replied. At that moment, he felt no more hesitation and had no more qualms about offending the Huanggu family.

A short moment later, the ancestor seemed to have thought of something, and immediately had a rather artificial look on his face, “However, Jian Chen. You must first let me see this senior for me to agree. As long as I can get this senior to personally agree to help, only then will I consider this to be a done deal.”

“Very well, I will first return to invite this senior!”

After leaving the mountain peak of the ancestor, Jian Chen returned to the Huang family’s villa where Huang Luan was and walked to the second story of the pavilion.

There was still the lingering scent of orchid in the room, and upon entrance, Jian Chen felt rather intoxicated by the smell. Jian Chen didn’t know that this was the smell of orchid to begin with, and neither did he know what the importance behind this essence was.

Hearing the sound of footsteps behind her, Huang Luan seemed to have realized that it was Jian Chen from her spot next to the window and whirled around to look expectantly at him. A trail of tears could still be seen on her face in a rather pitiful site.

“You’re back; did you think of a way?” Huang Luan asked expectantly. Despite her being so unwilling to have Jian Chen use the Qinhuang Kingdom to help her family at the cost of several power-holders being unsatisfied with him, she still maintained a glimmer of hope and some expectations.

“I’ve already convinced your grandfather who has agreed with me as well. If I can find someone even stronger than the Huanggu family, he will rescind your betrothment to the Huanggu family.” Jian Chen explained.

Jian Chen’s words made Huang Luan feel more worried for him rather than herself. Pacing to Jian Chen, she spoke in concern,

“Will the Qinhuang Kingdom support you in this? If they participate in this matter, they will offend a few Saint Rulers, even the Huanggu family would be an injured party.”

Jian Chen laughed, “I’m not that foolish. Don’t worry. This matter won’t be something the Qinhuang Kingdom will participate in. Even I don’t wish for the troubles of the Qinhuang Kingdom to be increased. However, whether I can invite this senior or not, I am still not completely sure myself. In short, I will try my best. I came here so I can say goodbye for now. To finish this problem, I must hurry on back.”

“Then you have to take care of yourself!” Huang Luan’s heart trembled with affection. At this current moment, she was truly moved by Jian Chen.

With a nod of his head, Jian Chen turned around to leave without another word.

Afterward, Jian Chen looked for the five Imperial Advisors currently participating in a banquet with the rest of the Huang family. Dragging them away from the dining table, they all bade farewell to the head of the Huang family and hurriedly left.

Sniffing the scent of the essence fragrance on Jian Chen, Qing Shaofan gave a deep look to Jian Chen with a mischievous smile, “Honored Imperial Protector, why is there such a fragrance to you? Were you perhaps doing something bad in the Huang family for you to leave in such a worry?”

Jian Chen had been worrying about several serious matters and had completely disregarded everyone's teasing. With a calm voice, he responded, "There is some matters we need to hurry back to, that is why we left in such a hurry."

Seeing the grim look on his face, Xiao Tian and the others lost their teasing mood and grew somber. Speaking for everyone, Xiao Tian asked, "Honored Imperial Protector, what in the world has happened that made you hurry like this?"

"It's not quite a short story, but it's also not quite a long story. In short, it is a rather important personal matter to me." Jian Chen spoke vaguely.

Xiao Tian and the others realized that Jian Chen was not going to explain to them, so they didn't bother to continue asking. Instead, they focused on traveling.

The six of them traversed thousands of meters through the sky at a tremendously fast flight speed. Beneath their feet was the endless sea of clouds and even the sky in front of them was so vast that it could not be seen in completion. One would only be able to see the setting sun falling down beneath the horizon.

Two days later, the group returned to the Gesun Kingdom. Jian Chen took a quick bath in a nearby river to wash away the remaining smell on him before putting on a new pair of white clothes to return to the Changyang clan.

"This lowly officer pays his respect to the fourth master!"

Within the Changyang clan, there was practically no one who didn't know Jian Chen. Whether it was a guard or servant, they all bowed respectfully in salute to Jian Chen as he traveled into the manor.

After his return to the Changyang clan, Jian Chen didn't even stop to see his parents and headed straight to Ming Dong's place of rest. Xiao Tian and the others finished their mission and scattered instead of continuing to follow Jian Chen.

"Eh? Jian Chen, when did you return?" Jian Chen's sudden arrival surprised Ming Dong. There was a happy smile on his face for a moment, but when he saw the solemn and grim look on Jian Chen's face, Ming Dong couldn't help but feel the smile on his face disappear slowly. "Jian Chen, did the Huang family make trouble for you?" In Ming Dong's mind, Jian Chen was a friend that had experienced life and death with him; therefore, he felt extremely close to him. He was his most trustworthy friend and would not permit any single person to wrong Jian Chen.

Jian Chen shook his head gently and sat down at the table. Personally pouring a cup of tea to drink, he spoke seriously, "Ming Dong, there is something I require your help with!"

Ming Dong sat in the seat across from Jian Chen and looked at Jian Chen with upraised eyebrows and a rather dissatisfied look. "Jian Chen, are you or are you not my sworn brother? Using such a manner to speak with me, just say whatever you need to say with me. Don't go beating around the bush like we are strangers. As long as it is your problem, whether it requires me to scale a



mountain of blades or dive into a sea of fire, I, Ming Dong, will not shirk my duties.”

Jian Chen gave an apologetic smile and immediately cut to the chase. “Ming Dong, I wish to have your uncle Tian come forth and help settle a matter impartially.”

Hearing that Jian Chen actually needed his uncle Tian, Ming Dong immediately sensed that the matter was serious and grew solemn in accordance to the situation.

Afterward, Jian Chen gave him a detailed explanation about the matters with Huang Luan and her family to Ming Dong without any detail left out. After hearing all of this, Ming Dong’s grim expression faded away and he instead stared at Jian Chen with a meaningful look. Smiling mischievously, he said, “Just what was I thinking? So it was this type of matter. Jian Chen, for the sake of making such a fuss for a woman you have met only several times in the past, don’t tell me you’ve taken a fancy to someone else’s wife-to-be!”

Jian Chen gave a hollow laugh, “It isn’t as complicated as you think it is. No matter what is said, Huang Luan and I had traveled together for a short duration in Mercenary City. I do not wish to see her wed to a person she does not love.”

“Haha, Jian Chen. You don’t need to be so embarrassed. Polygamy on the Tian Yuan Continent has been a common occurrence for a very long time. Even your own father has married four wives. With your strength and appearance, if you didn’t find several girls, then it would be a huge disservice to that rather

envious face of yours.” Ming Dong teased.

Changing the subject, Jian Chen spoke, “Ming Dong, would it be possible for your uncle Tian to come out? Aside from him, there is no one else that I feel can accomplish this.”

Jian Chen knew a decent amount of Saint Rulers in his personal network. Aside from the four Imperial Protectors of the Qinhuang Kingdom, there was still the elder Xiu from Longevity Valley and Ming Dong’s uncle Tian. The four Imperial Protectors were symbols for the Qinhuang Kingdom and couldn’t simply act as they pleased.

Elder Xiu had already hidden himself away for many years although Jian Chen knew that he was at the very least a Saint Ruler. After such a hermit lifestyle, Jian Chen did not wish to be the one to break that way of life for the elder. He did not wish to add to the burdens of elder Xiu and had decided not to ask him. Furthermore, elder Xiu’s true strength had not been ascertained by Jian Chen, so Jian Chen did not know whether or not the elder would be able to be of much help.

All that was left was uncle Tian. The time when the Saint Ruler recognized Ming Dong, Jian Chen had been quite shocked. To have even Heaven Saint Masters as servants, uncle Tian had lived by himself in a floating shrine as its master. This type of setting was something that neither the Saint Rulers of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger nor the Qinhuang Kingdom possessed.

More importantly, Ming Dong’s uncle Tian had become a Saint Ruler 5000 years ago. Now 5000 years later, just what terrifying

level of strength would he reach now? Whatever the case, with uncle Tian's efforts, there would be no way that he would make no headway in 5000 years.

Moreover, uncle Tian was seemingly a person of Mercenary City. Although a mercenary was a rather free occupation, Jian Chen had learned something after he visited Mercenary City. Although the Tian Yuan Continent had such a free occupation like being a mercenary, Mercenary City was still a very large organization of mercenaries. Even the elders within it were Saint Rulers of large amounts and had other idle Saint Rulers as close friends.

With these thoughts, Jian Chen figured that Mercenary City was an extremely strong power. It was, after all, the place that had been created by the continent's number one individual, Mo Tianyun.

“Jian Chen, I've said before. As long as it is your problem, then I, Ming Dong, will scale a mountain of blades and dive into a sea of flames without hesitation.” Ming Dong took out a jade piece, “My uncle Tian gave this to me. He instructed me to just put some Saint Force into this to notify him should I ever come across a problem I cannot resolve.”

Clenching tightly onto the jade piece, Ming Dong began to circulate his Saint Force into the piece and allowed it to be sucked in. After the Saint Force was absorbed, the originally dull jade piece began to light out brilliantly.

“Ming Dong, where is your uncle Tian now?” Jian Chen asked out of curiosity.

“Probably in Mercenary City. Ever since you entered the holy lands, uncle Tian and I went to my parents and took them to Mercenary City. However I didn’t return with him and remained in the Gesun Kingdom. After I accomplished the mission you gave me, I stayed here.” Ming Dong spoke.

Jian Chen pointed at the jade piece Ming Dong and asked, “Mercenary City is extremely far away from here, will that method really work?”

Ming Dong gave a proud smile, “Don’t worry, Jian Chen. You don’t know how amazing my uncle Tian is. I have full confidence that he won’t trick me.”

As soon as Ming Dong finished speaking, the space in front of them immediately began to surge and swirl. Then, as soon as the two men realized what was happening, a rip in space had suddenly appeared. In an instant, a doorway had been formed from the space, and from the other side of the doorway was a rather gigantic palace hall.

Right in front of Jian Chen’s stunned eyes, a white-robed, middle-aged man came walking forth from the doorway. This man had an ordinary facial appearance, but the way the space seemed to unaffected him while he floated above the ground gave him a supernatural sensation.

“Uncle Tian!” Upon seeing this man, Ming Dong called out affectionately as if greeting a family member.

# Chapter 523: Revisiting The Huang Family

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Seeing the middle-aged man in front of him, Jian Chen was in a daze. Uncle Tian's method of arrival was far too odd for Jian Chen to understand. It was practically millions of kilometers away from Mercenary City to here. Merely a breath after Ming Dong had used that jade piece of his, Ming Dong's uncle Tian had traversed that distance in no time at all.

Even more shocking to Jian Chen was that uncle Tian seemed to break apart the fabric of space as well. Furthermore, he appeared precisely within this not-as-spacious room. Such a precise position like this was almost unbelievable to him.

That was because a Space Gate simply couldn't be set up this quickly.

The Space Gate behind the man slowly disappeared from sight, allowing the space it had opened up from to return back to normal. No one there would be able to see that a fissure had even opened up in the sky to begin with.

There was not a sliver of energy to be felt from this man; from the appearance of his face, he was nothing more than the average commoner. Nothing strange could be said about him except for the fact that he was floating in mid-air like some sort of supernatural figure.

“Uncle Tian, I didn't think that you'd come so fast. This jade piece you gave me is really useful!” Ming Dong spoke in

excitement. Toward this middle-aged man, his voice held an undisguised level of emotion. In Ming Dong's mind, uncle Tian held a tremendous amount of power and was even more important than his own parents. The reason why he achieved the success he had today was all due to uncle Tian's kindness. It was uncle Tian that had transformed him from an ordinary mercenary into what he was now. Not only did he grow from a Great Saint Master to a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master, he was one of the many people on the Yian Yuan Continent that held a highly coveted Heaven Tier Battle Skill.

Uncle Tian slowly descended to the ground and smiled kindly at Ming Dong as if he was looking fondly at his very own grandson. Brimming with care and doting, he smiled, "Child, what have you come to your uncle for?"

"Uncle Tian, my sworn brother Jian Chen has something he requires your assistance with." Ming Dong spoke.

Uncle Tian continued to have that kind smile on his face as he turned toward Jian Chen. Suddenly, the light in his eyes concentrated heavily onto Jian Chen before turning resplendent. With a startled sound of surprise, the Saint Ruler's expression grew astonished. Shortly afterward, two bright golden rays of light shot out from his eyes and seemed to bath Jian Chen within their golden color.

Jian Chen wanted to say something, but he found himself unexpectedly unable to do anything. It seemed that the golden ray of light caused his entire body to become immobilized. He no longer had control of it.

This sudden development made Jian Chen feel extremely shocked, but he calmed himself down in a flash since he knew that Ming Dong's uncle Tian wouldn't do anything unfavorable to him without a reason.

The Saint Ruler's actions caused Ming Dong to turn pale with fright before crying out to him in anxiety, "Uncle Tian, just what are you doing..."

Before Ming Dong could finish his sentence, uncle Tian held up his hand to stop him. With a calm voice, he said, "Do not worry, I only wished to look at the current condition of his body, I am not hurting him."

With that, Ming Dong let out a sigh of relief — he thought that uncle Tian was about to hurt Jian Chen.

Very quickly, the golden ray surrounding Jian Chen's body disappeared. The golden light in the Saint Ruler's eyes had also returned back to its normal color. As soon as the light disappeared, Jian Chen felt his body control come back to him.

Although he was not hurt in any way, Jian Chen was practically sweating bullets. He did not know just how strong uncle Tian was, but this course of action by him had frightened Jian Chen. If a single observation with his eyes was enough for Jian Chen to lose control of his body, that meant uncle Tian's strength was truly too terrifying to behold.

Uncle Tian's eyebrows narrowed together as his brightly lit eyes stared at Jian Chen. With a low voice, he wondered, "Your Saint Weapon was actually shattered?"

Jian Chen's heart leaped up his throat once again. The secret that his Saint Weapon was shattered was something that neither the Saint Rulers of the Qinhuang Kingdom nor the Huang family had been able to discover. This uncle Tian had unexpectedly been able to do so with a single glance, finding out Jian Chen's greatest secret just like that. How could he not feel surprised at that? In truth, Jian Chen began to exaggerate and think that in front of uncle Tian, there was not a single secret he could hide from him.

Jian Chen grew extremely courteous and cupped his hands together, "Junior Jian Chen pays his respects to senior. Senior is correct, this junior's Saint Weapon was destroyed."

"Curious, what a miracle! Despite your Saint Weapon gone, your strength and mind power seem even stronger than before. Even my eyes cannot see just what fortuitous event caused this to happen!" Uncle Tian replied.

The Saint Ruler's words shocked Jian Chen again. He had no idea that even his mind power would be able to be determined at a glance. Though, he felt a little reassured since the Saint Ruler's voice did not indicate that he had learned about the azure and violet Sword Spirits.

"It is as senior says, this junior came across a happenstance that allowed me to preserve my strength even after my Saint Weapon was shattered." Jian Chen replied respectfully.



Uncle Tian nodded his head with his eyes still staring brightly at Jian Chen. Then, with a slightly more thoughtful expression, he spoke, “With the intensity of your power of thought, you’re already capable of controlling the energy of the world. I didn’t expect that since we last met half a year ago, you would reach such a level. This rate of progression is simply too unbelievable.” Uncle Tian paused to sit down at the nearby table. “Tell me why you need my assistance so much.”

Jian Chen replied respectfully, “Senior, this junior has a matter that I wish senior will oversee impartially.” With that, Jian Chen began to recount the tale of the Huang family to him.

Hearing the entire story from start to finish, uncle Tian sat there without a word and with furrowed eyebrows.

At this, Ming Dong felt quite anxious. Worried that his uncle Tian would refuse Jian Chen, Ming Dong pleaded, “Uncle Tian, Jian Chen is my sworn brother. If it wasn’t for Jian Chen saving me in the past, I wouldn’t be able to survive until today, let alone see you uncle Tian. Now that my sworn brother is in trouble, you must help my sworn brother.”

Almost as if he was moved by Ming Dong’s words, the Saint Ruler sighed, “I had originally planned on not getting involved, but I suppose I should help just this once if Jian Chen saved your life before.”

Jian Chen was unable to contain his joy at those words and clasped his hands together, “Many thanks to senior for his assistance!”

“No thanks is necessary. Jian Chen, you are quite talented in skill. In fact, you are several times stronger than Ming Dong. I hope that when I am not around, you will look after Ming Dong in my stead.” He sighed as a helpless light flashed in his eyes.

“Senior, this junior and Ming Dong are sworn brothers. Even without senior saying so, this junior would do so.” Jian Chen spoke honestly.

Ming Dong felt rather displeased at uncle Tian’s words and grumbled, “Uncle Tian, you take me to be a young child still.”

Uncle Tian smiled, “There’s no time to lose then. The sooner we go, the sooner we can resolve this matter. Jian Chen, which direction is the Huang family located in?”

“About several ten thousand kilometers in the northwestern mountains!” Jian Chen spoke with excitement. With the Saint Ruler Tian making his advent, the ancestor of the Huang family would have no qualms either.

Growing silent for a moment, the Saint Ruler then responded, “I’ve found the location, let us go then.”

“Yes, senior!” Jian Chen immediately walked toward the exit. After his feet had taken several steps forward, his entire body suddenly came to a stop as he stared at uncle Tian in amazement.

He had only watched uncle Tian's right hand slowly lift up before settling down on the empty space in front of his chest. The next moment, the space near him began to violently tremble; and in another brief moment, a pitch-black crack appeared right in front of Jian Chen's eyes. The crack expanded rapidly before instantaneously becoming a Space Gate. The entrance to the other side was a very familiar site to Jian Chen — it was the house where the ancestor of the Huang family lived in.

“It should be here. Let's go then!” Uncle Tian spoke before waving his other hand. Jian Chen could only feel a tremendous amount of power envelop him without any resistance before independently shooting him through the space along with Ming Dong.

After the three disappeared, the spatial rend left behind slowly winked out of existence, allowing the space to become normal again. The only difference was that the former three inhabitants of the room had vanished without any of the Heaven Saint Masters in Changyang Manor noticing.

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At the Huang family's residence on the sword-shaped mountain peak, the ancestor of the Huang family was cultivating as per usual. Pondering on his position over a stool, his expression couldn't help but reveal an expectant look. Ever since Jian Chen had left, he couldn't bring himself to the calm needed to cultivate. All his mind could think about were the words “5000 year old Saint Ruler”.

After becoming a Saint Ruler for so many years, the ancestor was extremely understanding just how paramount the existence of a 5000 year old Saint Ruler was. Such a person like this was even more rare than a commoner getting a glance at one of the ancient clans or finding the feather of a phoenix and the scale of a Qilin.

On the Tian Yuan Continent, whether it was a Heaven Saint Master, Saint Ruler, or an existence above a Saint Ruler, they were all still unable to escape from the shackles of age.

On the continent, the average human would only be able to live for 200 years. An Earth Saint Master was expected to live for 500 years, and a Heaven Saint Master for 1000 years. For a Saint Ruler, they should only be able to live for 3000 years. Even a Ninth Layer Saint Ruler would only be able to live for 3200 years at most. Unless there was some sort of longevity medicine, it was very hard to break apart this law.

In order to live for 5000 years, one had to make a breakthrough as a Saint Ruler. A Saint Ruler would never be able to live for as long as 5000 years. Under the heavens, only a Saint King or higher would be able to live for that long of a lifespan.

It had been for this reason that when the ancestor had first heard Jian Chen describe this Saint Ruler having reached 5000 years old, he lost all of his self-control and had even enthusiastically agreed to Jian Chen's request at the risk of offending the Huanggu clan.

Just like this, the ancestor sat there for two days uneasily. He couldn't calm down enough to cultivate, and in his mind, he was extremely anxious to see whether or not Jian Chen would really be

able to bring such a character to help his Huang family. With such a high and mighty existence like this backing the Huang family, they would be able to hold their head up high in front of the ancient clans, let alone such small and insignificant isolated families.

Just while the ancestor sat nervously on the stool, he suddenly felt the space in front of him start to warp and distort. Then, a Space Gate suddenly appeared right in front of the hut where the ancestor lived. Three people were revealed as they walked out from it.

# Chapter 524: Grand Elder Of Mercenary City

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Seeing this tear in the fabric of space occur within his tiny house made the ancestor feel dumbfounded. He had placed a barrier on this mountain so that it would be isolated from the rest of the world. Even a Saint Ruler wouldn't be able to walk in here without being detected, let alone open a Space Gate without resistance. Furthermore, this Space Gate had coincidentally opened up right inside his small home.

When his eyes landed upon Jian Chen who was one of the three, his eyes began to shine and his body began to tremble. Immediately leaping up from his jade seat, he gave a respectful bow, "Junior Huang Tianba pays his respect to senior." The ancestor was so excited that his voice quavered as he spoke.

Uncle Tian glanced at the ancestor before turning to ask Jian Chen, "Is this the man?" From his stare, uncle Tian simply disregarded the ancestor as anyone important despite him being a Saint Ruler.

Jian Chen nodded. Seeing the venerable expression of the ancestor, he couldn't help but laugh to himself in his mind, but his expression was still calm on the outside. "Senior, I've done what you have asked and brought the person in question to you. Is this to your satisfaction?"

The ancestor's face started when he heard Jian Chen. Changing from a respectful expression to one that would bow and scrape for favors, he seemed as if he was afraid of infuriating this senior in

front of him. After all, having such a high and mighty person come running all the way for such a tiny figure like him was not how a respectful senior should be treated.

“Brother Jian Chen loves his jokes, so this junior had spoken his own joke. I had no idea that brother Jian Chen would take it seriously. Senior, if this junior has offended you for having you brought all the way here, please forgive this one.” The ancestor sounded very panicked. A monster of a person who had managed to live for 5000 years was someone that even the ancient clans wouldn’t offend, let alone the ancestor of an isolated family like the Huang.

Uncle Tian remained unmoved at the bowing of the head and the bending of the knees of the ancestor and replied indifferently, “There was no harm. I came at Jian Chen’s request to resolve a problem. I presume you are the man in question of this problem.”

At those words, the heart of the ancestor was shocked by Jian Chen’s capabilities. In this moment, Jian Chen’s status instantly rocketed up in his mind to become a person who he could never offend and also someone who should be roped into his family at all costs.

He didn’t dare not respond to the ancestor, so he replied with a respectful tone, “Senior’s words are too serious. There is no need for senior to involve himself in this trifling matter, this junior will resolve it himself.”

“If that is right, then that would be for the best. I do not like meddling in the affairs of others, but I have already promised Jian

Chen to help. I have listened to your family troubles, so I shall give you this jade piece. Should you ever need me to act, then just crush this in your hand and I'll come within three breaths worth of time!" A thumb-sized white jade floated from uncle Tian's hand and slowly moved toward the ancestor.

The ancestor's excitement could barely be contained as he took hold of the white jade into his hands. "Many thanks for senior's generosity!" To be able to receive the assistance of a Saint King was far too important in meaning to the Huang family. Although he only had this one chance to use it, it would bolster the might of the Huang family and would resolve the issue of the Huang family's conflict with the other Saint Rulers.

The ancestor hesitated for a moment as he looked at uncle Tian for a moment before carefully asking. "If this junior might ask senior what to refer to you by, or what affiliation senior might have so that in the future this junior's meager help may be given."

"I am known as Tian Jian, a grand elder of Mercenary City. Your help won't be necessary for now with what power you have. Wait until you become a Saint King, then we'll talk!" Uncle Tian spoke. To him, a Saint Ruler was nothing special, there were plenty of those to be seen in Mercenary City.

When the title of being a grand elder for Mercenary City was heard to the ancestor, his entire body was suddenly drained of its strength and his knees dropped to the ground after being unable to sustain his body weight. There was panic in his expression, and his heart threatened to leap out from his throat. Looking at Tian Jian's face, there was utter disbelief in his expression along with



some terror and fear mixed in.

As a Saint Ruler, he was somewhat knowledgeable about the inner workings of Mercenary City despite not being affiliated with it. He was extremely clear on the hierarchy of Mercenary City, how it was ruled, governed, and divided up.

Mercenary City was indeed a city, but it wasn't under the jurisdiction of any one area while maintaining the same strength as any other city might have. There was no city ruler as Mercenary City had no need for one of those to keep law and order. The prohibition on fighting was a rule that even Saint Rulers wouldn't dare violate. The ones who truly held power in Mercenary City, were all from a group of elders. These elders were the highest nucleus of power for Mercenary City, and among them, the grand elders held the highest position.

It was no exaggeration to say that a grand elder was the ultimate ruler of Mercenary City. Not only could they mobilize the entirety of Mercenary City, they were the decided people who had the most authority in it.

Aside from that, the grand elders of Mercenary City were extremely strong. They stood on the forefront of the strongest on the Tian Yuan Continent and were truly the ones who stood at the top of the power pyramid.

Even if he were to dream, the ancestor would never hope to think that Jian Chen would invite a senior that held such unimaginable power. Even the thought had struck a feeling of terror in his heart.

Like a wooden chicken, the ancestor just stood there. Despite being a Saint Ruler, he was nothing but an ant in front of a grand elder of Mercenary City.

Moving his eyes from the ancestor to Ming Dong affectionately, he smiled, "Child, you should come with me to Mercenary City and stay there for now."

"Uncle Tian. I wish to be with brother Jian Chen for now. I'll stay here." Ming Dong responded.

"Very well! All you lack is experience right now. Following Jian Chen would make you stronger than staying in Mercenary City." Tian Jian nodded.

Just then, Ming Dong suddenly thought of something and his eyes began to sparkle, "Uncle Tian, the Shi family and the Jiede clan are both enemies of ours. Our sworn brother has been forced by them in the past. You might as well settle the problem with those two families. If the experts of their families come, the two of us wouldn't have enough strength to fight them."

Tian Jian shook his head, "Child, you cannot leave every single problem for your uncle to resolve. If there comes a day when I am not around, how will you survive on the Tian Yuan Continent? Right now, you must learn to overcome any difficulties and troubles you come across yourself." Although he was lecturing Ming Dong, Tian Jian's voice was very soft and did not sound too harsh. It gave off the grandfatherly feeling of benevolence.

“Yes, uncle Tian!” Ming Dong spoke with some helplessness and disappointment.

“Now that the problem has been taken care of, I will be returning to Mercenary City. Will you be staying here in the Gesun Kingdom?” Tian Jian asked.

Ming Dong had said nothing and instead looked to Jian Chen.

Jian Chen took a moment to think about it, “Senior, we will be staying here for some time!”

Tian Jian said nothing and instead lifted his palms up to part the space once more. Within two breaths worth of time, a giant building could be seen on the other side of the Space Gate before he disappeared into it.

At this sight, Jian Chen’s eyes revealed a deep look of yearning. Tian Jian’s usage of space was something that was perfected to the highest level. With such capabilities like this, one would be able to travel anywhere under the heavens without wasting time or money to travel on the road.

With Jian Chen’s current strength, he could only yearn for this power for now. A spot where Tian Jian resided was a spot where Jian Chen could only look forward to. After all, that was a position where even a Saint Ruler had to bow and scrape his knee.

The ancestor watched the ancestor leave with a stunned expression. A little absent-mindedly, he muttered, "So that is the strength of a Saint King, they can tear apart the space to travel millions of kilometers." Shortly afterward, the ancestor looked to the jade piece held in his hand and began to grow excited. In this moment of observation, this jade piece was a thousand times more precious than any other treasure under the heavens. None other could compare to this one.

The ancestor took out an exquisite jade case from his Space Ring and gently placed the jade piece into it for safekeeping. This jade piece could be used to summon a grand elder of Mercenary City; even if it was only a single use, it was still priceless in value since it equated to an unbelievable amount of might.

After putting away the jade piece, the ancestor exhaled. It took him a long time to calm down because his heart was still beating rapidly. It was at this moment that he discovered with some shock that his entire forehead was drenched with sweat.

Wiping away the sweat on his forehead, the ancestor looked to Jian Chen and Ming Dong with a complicated stare. Despite Ming Dong only being an Earth Saint Master, Ming Dong was essentially the ancestor of his own family in the eyes of the ancestor. He had witnessed how Ming Dong had referred to Tian Jian all too clearly.

Even with the ancestor in such a state of doubtful panic, Jian Chen laughed and spoke to him, "Senior, would it be possible for you to rescind the engagement between miss Huang'er and the Huanggu clan?"

“Yes, yes, of course.” The ancestor hurried to respond. Now that the ancestor knew that Jian Chen and Ming Dong were both backed by a grand elder from Mercenary City, his attitude toward them both drastically changed. Even now, there was a bit of a fawning tone to it that disregarded his own status.

# Chapter 525: The Young Lady Offering A Kiss

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Now that Huang Luan's situation was finally done and over with, Jian Chen's face had a smile on it. However, his heart knew that everything was thanks to Ming Dong. If not for his intimate connection with uncle Tian, Jian Chen never would have been able to persuade uncle Tian to help him.

Yet Jian Chen was also extremely shocked at the status of uncle Tian. A grand elder of Mercenary City! Although he had no idea just how noble of a position that was in Mercenary City, he could pretty much guess just how prestigious a grand elder was.

Afterward, Jian Chen and Ming Dong both left the mountain peak with the ancestor accompanying them.

After experiencing what he had just went through, the ancestor's attitude toward Jian Chen and Ming Dong had completely changed. He even unexpectedly accompanied Jian Chen and Ming Dong as they flew through the air. Even his status of being a Saint Ruler had been forgotten with how he laughed and smiled as he talked with them on the way to the villa.

The three finally came to a stop right in front of the center of the halls. At the same time, plenty of Heaven Saint Masters had already begun to gather here from every corner of the villa. After gathering in the halls, everyone knelt down to the ground and cried out, "We pay our respects to the ancestor!" It seemed that on the way, the ancestor had managed to pass a message to a few of them.

“Everyone, stand up and come in. This old man has an announcement to make!” Throwing out his words, the ancestor swished his robes around as he strode into the hall where all the important matters were discussed.

Every single Heaven Saint Master within the Huang family looked at each other before turning to look at Jian Chen who was standing right next to the ancestor. Their hearts shook as if they had started to connect the dots.

The Huang family had lived in isolation for many thousands of years, so the amount of Heaven Saint Masters they had wasn't a small number. At least thirteen of these Heaven Saint Masters were seeing Jian Chen for the first time. They were all people who held an important position in the family. Only those who had usually remained in seclusion to cultivate or the two representatives of the Huang family had seen Jian Chen before.

Very quickly, everyone gathered in the halls. The thirteen Heaven Saint Masters sat quietly on their chairs on both sides of the hall. Reverently, they looked to the ancestor seated ahead of them. Under the idea of the ancestor, Jian Chen and Ming Dong both sat right next to him in the closest seats possible.

Most of the people there were already clear on Jian Chen's status as the Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom and truly possessed the right to sit where he was. But an Earth Saint Master like Ming Dong seated in such a position caused many people to question just why he was there. However, no one had dared to voice any objections since it was at the request of the ancestor. It

was only in their hearts that they tried to guess Ming Dong's identity or which family he was the young master to.

The ancestor said nothing about the matter and instead moved straight to the main topic at hand. "This old man has called you all here today for an announcement." The ancestor stopped for a moment as his eyes observed the several individuals of the Huang family with bright eyes. "From here on out, Huang Luan's betrothment to the Huanggu clan is now absolved. Have someone sent to the Huanggu clan to tell them of this news!"

At the voice of the ancestor, plenty of people began to blanch while a few of them revealed faint smiles on their faces. To them, the only reason why their ancestor would annul the betrothment with the Huanggu clan would be for the reason that he had found an even stronger power to ally themselves with. An Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom would be such an example.

"Ancestor, this is an extremely important matter. If we were to unilaterally agree to annul the betrothment, it would be a great slap to the faces of the Huanggu clan. There is no way that they won't feel dissatisfied with us. This is a situation where our friendship with the Huanggu would become irrevocably destroyed." An elder spoke seriously.

"Elder Ping speaks correctly. Ancestor, annulling the betrothment is something we should absolutely avoid. Our family has enjoyed several hundred years of friendly relations with the Huanggu clan, and they have taken to Huang Luan with great interest. With this, the Huanggu family's friendship with our Huang family would be ruined. Please reconsider, ancestor."



Another elder spoke in agreement to not annul the betrothment.

The gleam in the ancestor's eyes suddenly grew ferocious as he gave a sharp stare to the two elders, "Ping Qiao, Huang Yingran, this old man knows that your relations with the Huanggu clan is quite decent, but this old man has already made a decision. I will not change my mind, and neither will you two say anymore about this."

The ancestor's voice was firm and decisive without leaving behind any margin to talk back. This made everyone who heard the ancestor give up on trying to convince him to change his mind.

At this, no one made any more objections. Even those who had decent relations with the Huanggu clan and wished to help them had no other choice but to close their mouths shut.

"I've already made up my mind on this. Dispatch someone to let the Huanggu clan know. Be sure to give them some gifts to compensate for this." The ancestor spoke.

"Yes, ancestor!" Everyone replied.

Then the ancestor made a second announcement. "And now this old man has another announcement to make. From here on out, our friends Jian Chen and Ming Dong will be our most honored guests of the Huang family. Every person must ensure to be on their best behavior without any delay or risk this old man's punishment!" With that, the ancestor's voice grew harsh.

These two brats had the backing of a grand elder from Mercenary City, making them people who could not be offended by any means. The ancestor had long since made his decision to do his best to rope these two into his group.

Everyone seated down below was stupefied as they looked in shock toward Ming Dong. They hadn't expected the ancestor to place so much importance on Ming Dong. Jian Chen was an Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom, so he was to be expected to receive such treatment. But Ming Dong's identity was something that everyone was completely curious about now.

The ancestor had not introduced Ming Dong since he himself did not have much understanding of him. He had only known Ming Dong's name because Jian Chen had said it before. After the ancestor had finished, Ming Dong had seemed to have gained an extremely high position within the family despite being an outsider. This forced every single Heaven Saint Master to be extremely polite to an Earth Saint Master like Ming Dong, but an act like this was practically unprecedented in their family history.

After the meeting was over, the ancestor did not return to his mountain to cultivate, and instead prepared a banquet to personally receive Jian Chen and Ming Dong. This action of the ancestor yet again caused every single Heaven Saint Master there to drop their jaws wide open in shock. A prestigious Saint Ruler personally receiving an Earth Saint Master was an absolutely fantastic story to hear about on the continent.

Every single individual from the Huang family grew even more curious to what status Ming Dong held as a result. However, they

could not directly inquire about Ming Dong and were left to conjecture to themselves in chaos because the ancestor had told them to speak no more about the subject.

Jian Chen did not participate in the banquet and instead bade farewell to the Huang family to walk to Huang Luan's pavilion. He wanted to personally report the news to her.

Jian Chen walked into the pavilion without obstruction and walked straight up to the second floor. This time, Jian Chen did not smell that same sweet scent from two days ago. That enchanting smell that had intoxicated his senses had completely vanished now.

Jian Chen's eyes swept around the room before catching sight of Huang Luan's figure. All he could see was Huang Luan's figure wearing a black cheongsam similar to the one from two days ago. Still seated by the window by herself, she stared out at the scenery beyond in a daze without being conscious of the environment around her. Even Jian Chen's entrance had gone unnoticed by her.

Noticing that Huang Luan had not noticed him come in, Jian Chen sighed to himself. He could already imagine just how damaging the news of her being betrothed to the Huanggu family was to her heart. She was practically beside herself as a result; it was a good thing that this problem was now done and over with.

"Miss Huang Luan!" Jian Chen called out.

At this sudden call, Huang Luan was so startled that she jumped

up. Her dainty body gave a violent whirl to turn anxiously toward Jian Chen. She knew in her heart that whether or not she would be able to leave this pavilion in joy in the future was solely up to Jian Chen's words.

Seeing the anxious look on her face, Jian Chen couldn't help but break out into a faint smile, "Miss Huang Luan, I am very happy to say that your problem is now solved. Your ancestor has already annulled the betrothment between you and the Huanggu clan. You don't need to be so vexed about this situation anymore."

Huang Luan's face instantly went sluggish before quickly being replaced with joy. Her entire body began to tremble and shake violently with emotions as she spoke excitedly, "Re-really? You... you wouldn't be kidding with me, would you? Has the ancestor truly annulled the betrothment?" In this short time, her heart had been worried without reprieve. Her betrothment to the second master of the Huanggu clan was a curse and a tight shackle that bounded her body and tormented her. Not only did she not wish to be wed to the second master of that clan, she already had someone she loved in her heart. This man in her heart was far superior, far more outstanding, and was practically the living personification of perfection. Right now, these shackles and curses that had been placed on her body had practically vanished — by the one she loved no less. This was something that made her so moved that she couldn't contain herself.

Although she didn't know just what method Jian Chen had used to change the ancestor's mind, her nimble mind understood one thing. If the ancestor was willing to offend the Huanggu clan by rescinding the betrothment, what Jian Chen had done was no minor task.

“Of course it’s true. If you don’t believe me, you can go outside and see for yourself.” Jian Chen smiled.

Two teardrops stole away from Huang Luan’s eyes as she charged straight for Jian Chen like an arrow. With both arms tossed around Jian Chen to hug him, she stood on her tiptoes. Under the stunned eyes of Jian Chen, her delicate cherry-red mouth locked with Jian Chen’s own lips.

## Chapter 526: Deep Feelings

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With this sudden in-the-moment kiss from Huang Lua, Jian Chen's mind had instantly gone blank. He stood there for a very long time. This was the very first intimate action a female had effectuated with him in both his lifetimes.

The tip of his nose could practically smell the unique womanly scent of Huang Luan while a wonderful sensation he had never experienced before could be felt. It sent his mind into chaos. At this moment, Jian Chen was utterly confounded and did not know how to react.

Perhaps it had been because Huang Luan had suppressed her emotions for Jian Chen for far too long, for they had suddenly come bursting out in this moment like the eruption of a volcano. Fierce beyond fierce and unstoppable in its motions, her body passed all of her intensity through this one kiss, releasing all of the worry she had accumulated in her heart.

This would be the very first time Jian Chen would experience such a thing. He hadn't even time to bring a hand up to stop her and was now at a complete loss. Even after realizing what was happening, Jian Chen's heart had begun to leap erratically after feeling Huang Luan's soft tongue press against his. Even his usually drawn out breathing had become coarse.

Although Jian Chen had never thought about having to do anything with love, he was still a healthy male in the end. Huang Luan herself was very beautiful. In fact, she was devastatingly beautiful. Even under the heavens, she was very remarkable. So

when such a beautiful woman offered a kiss, even Jian Chen wasn't able to keep his calm. The hidden and deep feelings within Jian Chen had finally ignited, forcing Jian Chen to close his eyes.

Jian Chen's arms suddenly flew out to grasp onto Huang Luan's soft flesh and embrace her tightly to his body. Even through the thin clothes of Huang Luan, Jian Chen could feel the intense heat from her body, causing his heart to surge with emotions.

With their kiss, the two of them stuck close to each other. Jian Chen had been lit aflame due to Huang Luan's initiative; therefore, he had responded passionately. At this current moment, they had thrown out everything else to enjoy the pleasure of the moment.

A good while after, the two finally split apart. Huang Luan was still holding onto Jian Chen with both arms, but her head was tilted up to stare tenderly at Jian Chen's handsome face. As if obsessed, her head slowly leaned against Jian Chen's shoulder as she closed her eyes to feel the warmth of his body with her own.

Jian Chen let out a drawn out sigh as he calmed himself down. Allowing Huang Luan to rest on his shoulders, he lowered his head slightly to study this beauty, who seemed to be sleeping soundly, with a complicated expression.

After a while, Jian Chen let another sigh to the ceiling and spoke, "Luan'er, won't you regret what just happened? Am I truly worth your love?"

Huang Luan's eyes slowly opened to stare lovingly at Jian Chen.

With a shake of her head, she spoke, “I won’t. For this entire lifetime, I won’t regret this at all.”

“Jian Chen. Tell me, am I truly in your heart?” Huang Luan stared in anticipation.

Jian Chen sighed and stared at Huang Luan with a complicated look. He was silent for a while before finally responding, “Luan’er, I have no answer to give to you now. From the start, I never thought about settling down. There is far too much weight on my shoulders, and the pressure I face is tremendous as well. All I want right now is a way to become stronger.”

Huang Luan shook her head, “Jian Chen, that doesn’t matter. Luan’er is willing to wait. I’ll wait, even if I have to wait until the end of time! Forever I will wait, forever!”

Jian Chen was taken aback. It was at this moment that his mind shook fiercely. Just how did he never realize that Huang Luan’s feelings for him had reached such an unbelievably deep level.

However, he did not respond. He merely wrapped his arms around Huang Luan’s back and began to take in the scent coming from her body. Today would be the very first time he was ever intimate with a female, and today would also be the very first time he would hug the delicate body of a young woman. Such an experience left an impact on Jian Chen. The very beauty of the sensation ingrained itself within Jian Chen’s soul and branded itself into his mind. He would never forget this moment.



If that were the case, then he might as well add more to preserve this moment even more.

Together in this room, the two of them let this comfortable feeling envelope them. Time in this serene moment was completely forgotten by this bewitched couple.

After an indeterminate amount of time, the sounds of footsteps could be heard coming up the pavilion. Then, the hurried voice of a middle-aged man could be heard, “Luan’er, are you there? Your father has some good news to tell you.”

Upon hearing his voice, the two were like startled rabbits as they split apart from one another. Smoothening their clothes and returning to their normal expressions, they tried to pretend that nothing had happened.

The family head Huang Qinglan came walking into the pavilion with a succinct white robe when Jian Chen and Huang Luan saw him. With a smile, he spoke, “Luan’er, your father has some good news to tell you. After you hearing this, you’ll definitely...” While he was speaking, the family head suddenly realized that Jian Chen had beaten him here. He instantly grew stunned enough to pause mid-speech.

“Lord Huang!” Jian Chen cupped his hands nonchalantly with a smile on his face.

The head of the family regained his wits at that moment and gave an even wider smile. Cupping his hands in return, he spoke, “I did

not think the Imperial Protector would be here. This matter was all thanks to the help of the Imperial Protector, and now Luan'er will be trouble-free."

"The lord is too courteous. Miss Huang Luan is merely a good friend of this one. If she were to come across any trouble, this one should help anyways." Jian Chen answered.

The head of the family smiled, but his eyes hovered between Jian Chen and Huang Luan in observation. Despite the two of them pretending that nothing had happened, the man was experienced in such matters and could detect a few peculiarities. What made the man overjoyed was the fact that Jian Chen's eyes were completely different than before. They had changed so that Jian Chen was now looking at him like a future son-in-law looking to his father-in-law.

"I presume that the Imperial Protector has already told Luan'er the news. If that is the case, I have nothing more to say." With that, the man turned to look at Huang Luan. "Luan'er, the Imperial Protector has wasted no small efforts on this matter. Even our ancestor has made an effort on this matter in person, you must make sure to express your thanks to him."

"Your daughter understands!" Huang Luan spoke with a voice as low as a mosquito.

"Take your time to chat. I have some other matters to take care of, so I shall take my leave first." Huang Qinglan didn't have any intention to stay here any longer, so he quickly left the pavilion.

After Huang Qinglan left, only Jian Chen and Huang Luan were left. For a while, neither of the two spoke, creating a rather awkward atmosphere.

It was finally after a moment of silence that Huang Luan spoke. "Jian Chen, you brought the Qinhuang Kingdom into this now, will they truly help you in this matter though?"

"Don't worry. The Qinhuang Kingdom has no relation to this matter at all. I have another extremely strong senior that has come to help us. This senior's might is far stronger than the Qinhuang Kingdom, so your ancestor was more than willing to agree as well." Jian Chen spoke.

Huang Luan's heart was moved once more. She knew just how difficult it was to invite any strong senior to make an appearance for anyone. Aside from having a very close relationship, one would have to pay a disastrous price for their help.

Jian Chen remained in Huang Luan's room for some time before finally leaving. Then at the behest of the ancestor of the Huang family, he remained for another day. On the next day, he and Ming Dong both bade farewell to Huang Luan and the ancestor to head back to the Gesun Kingdom.

"Friends Jian Chen and Ming Dong, this old man knows about the burned bridge between you and the Sect of Dragon and Tiger. I shall give these two twin jade pieces to you, if the Saint Ruler tries to do something, just crush these jade pieces and this old man will

come as soon as I can to help!” The ancestor spoke as he handed two thumb-sized jade pieces to Jian Chen and Ming Dong. After knowing of the intimate connection between the two and the grand elder of Mercenary City, the ancestor had spared no effort to get on the good side of the two. With this method, the Huang family could possibly scale the giant tree that was the grand elder and perhaps gain the same treatment that the ancient clans would usually receive.

“Many thanks for senior’s kindness. This one will remember it!” Jian Chen took the jade piece happily. Over these past days, the Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger had weighed constantly on Jian Chen’s mind. Right now the ancestor was definitely willing to help stop the Saint Ruler from the sect; this was a very good way to resolve his biggest problem at hand.

“Hahahaha. My friend Jian Chen is far too polite. If there is ever any need for my Huang family, then please just ask. Our family will do our best to assist.” The elder couldn’t help but laugh.

## Chapter 527: Murky Skies

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Jian Chen and Ming Dong both left the Huang family. However, Ming Dong was not a Heaven Saint Master and could not fly through the sky; therefore, Jian Chen needed to carry him.

Seeing how his legs trailed behind him through the sky, Ming Dong had a yearning look on his face. With a sigh of admiration, he spoke, “Jian Chen, being a Heaven Saint Master seems great. Not only can you fly through the sky, you can go fast and at your own leisure as well. I really hope that I can hurry up and become a Heaven Saint Master.”

Jian Chen could only chuckle in response. “What are you hurrying for? Being able to become a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master at your young age is not something most can do. With your current strength, I don’t even know just how many people are envious of it. There’s only a short amount of time before you become a Heaven Saint Master anyways. Give it two years or so before you become one. For now, just focus on refining your foundation and listen to uncle Tian — you can’t go wrong listening to him.”

“I know that much as well, but when I see just how easily you all fly through the sky, I feel an urgent feeling in my heart. I simply want nothing more than to become a Heaven Saint Master; that way, I will be able to fly through the air by myself.” Ming Dong spoke.

“That day isn’t too far away. It’s been half a year already, all that remains is another two and a half years. That’s not a long time,

it'll come quickly.” Jian Chen replied.

“En, you're right, I just can't wait until that day, that's all.” Ming Dong spoke with an expectant look on his face. Becoming a Heaven Saint Master was a dream for every single cultivator that had not yet reached such a realm.

Suddenly, Ming Dong remembered something. His eyes turned to look at Jian Chen with a gleam, “Ah, Jian Chen, just what happened between you and Huang Luan now?”

Jian Chen immediately thought about the lingering emotions he had felt between him and Huang Luan within her pavilion. A complicated expression arose on his face as he grew quiet, “Let's not talk about that, I've no time to consider settling down. I've still plenty of things to do and plenty of responsibilities to shoulder still.”

“Is it because of the Shi and Jiede families?” Ming Dong asked with a serious expression. The Shi family and the Jiede clan were both problems that uncle Tian had been unwilling to resolve, leaving the problem to Jian Chen and Ming Dong to resolve by themselves. With Saint Rulers holding a position in both families, the two powers held a significant amount of pressure over Jian Chen and Ming Dong.

Jian Chen gave a curt nod. “Back then, I killed the experts of the Shi family and Jiede clan and even destroyed the Ruler Armaments from their families. This has led me into a neverending cycle with them, and since I am not a Saint Ruler, I simply have no way to defend myself against them.”

“Saint Ruler!” Upon hearing those two words, Ming Dong showed a look of yearning on his face. The enticement brought forth from the power of a Saint Ruler was truly too great. This was simply a whole new domain to step into.

“Jian Chen, uncle Tian once said that to become a Saint Ruler, one must be able to comprehend the mysteries of the world. Are you attempting to understand them now as an aside?” Ming Dong asked.

Jian Chen shook his head, “Understanding the mysteries of the world requires a foundation built off of the energy of the world. As long as one reaches a pinnacle state with their control over the energy of the world, they will be able to touch and start to comprehend the mysteries of the world. Although my power of thought is far stronger than any other Heaven Saint Master, my comprehension over the energy of the world is still superficial and nowhere close to being able to understand the mysteries of the world. When the day comes for me to reach a deep level of comprehension, I will naturally try to understand the domain that is the mysteries of the world. But this is a path with no shortcuts.”

Ming Dong revealed a crestfallen look, “So it seems that we can only take one step at a time then.”

Two days later, Jian Chen and Ming Dong finally returned to Changyang Manor. Xiao Tian and the others had been extremely curious on how they had managed to disappear so suddenly. It was because of their extreme confidence in Jian Chen’s strength that they did not panic when the two had disappeared. However, they

did wonder just what business was so important for the two to disappear so out of the blue.

No one found it prudent to ask where Jian Chen had gone off to, for they simply had no right to ask. Even Jian Chen's parents Changyang Ba and Bi Yuntian did not ask Jian Chen. As parents, they knew that their own child had already matured to become an independent man capable of doing his own thing. His own position and responsibilities were no longer within the domain of the two.

After exchanging several words of greeting with everyone, Jian Chen walked by himself to his own personal hall. Increasing in speed, his footsteps finally took him to his expansive bedroom where his bed was.

Seated at the head of the bed was the white tiger cub with its head still drooped down in slumber. By its side were several thousand year old ginseng and other ingredients.

Seeing the scant amount of heavenly resources left, Jian Chen revealed a worried look on his face. "I left a large pile of heavenly resources, but now there's only a small amount remaining. Ai, the tiger cub's appetite grows more and more each day." With that, Jian Chen retrieved another pile of heavenly resources and placed them beside the cub before walking out.

Afterward, Jian Chen remained in the Changyang clan for two days. In those two days, he spent the time with his group of friends and the princess You Lan within the interior of the manor. On the second day, Qin Ji had received a letter from the Qinhuang Kingdom, prompting him to return to the Qinhuang Kingdom as



soon as possible.

Having received the letter, Qin Ji had no plans to stay in Changyang Manor any longer. Bidding farewell to Jian Chen, he and the five other Imperial Advisors made an impromptu exit. However, Xiao Tian, the other four Imperial Advisors, and the three generals remained behind. A party of the Eastern Deity Soldiers remained stationed in Lore City while another party had been garrisoned at the Changyang clan.

Jian Chen wore an expensive white robe as he accompanied Sans and his mother around the area. Sans and his mother had received a cordial level of treatment from Changyang Ba and Bi Yuntian, causing the son and mother pair to gain a high level of treatment within the clan. They had been given their own courtyard and servants to wait on them. The head caretaker of the clan, Chang Wuji had even stipulated that the expenditures from the two would be footed by the Changyang clan, and a specialized group of soldiers would stand guard over the two. Such a treatment like this was basically on par with the treatment of the master of the family, Changyang Ba.

Sans and his mother had been very well-behaved and had lived in content within the Changyang clan. Although they would stroll outside of the manor to see the hustle and bustle of Lore City, they would never buy anything.

When Jian Chen found Sans and his mother, it seemed the two were in discussion. Their eyebrows were creased together, and there was a thoughtful but embarrassed look on their faces.

“Aunty, Sans, have you become accustomed to living here yet? If

there is anything you need, please seek uncle Chang. Uncle Chang will make sure to meet your expectations.” Jian Chen smiled.

Jian Chen’s sudden visit caused Sans and his mother to be surprised. Bolting upright, they said respectfully, “We pay our respects to the fourth master!” The mother even bent over in salute.

In their short time within the Changyang clan, Sans and his mother gained a deep understanding of the character Jian Chen. They knew that his status within the clan was as high as it could possibly be, and that he was also the Imperial Protector of the Gesun Kingdom. Such a tremendous difference in status between him and them caused the mother and son to feel extremely panicked.

“Aunty, Sans, we are all family here, there is no need to be too polite.” Jian Chen used his mind to control the energy of the world and temporarily freeze the area around the mother and son so that they could not bow to him any longer. The two of them were the family of Kendall, just how could Jian Chen let them bow to him?

Jian Chen walked freely over to the nearby table and sat down with a smile. “Aunty, Sans, come and sit. I saw you two talking earlier, was there something troubling you?”

The mother and son hesitated for a moment before Sans finally said something first, “Fourth master, my mother and I are extremely grateful for your consideration for our well-being, but the two of us had already grown accustomed to our ordinary lives from before. Living here like this is still a bit strange, so my

mother and I wish to move out”

Jian Chen’s eyebrows creased together as he listened, but before he could speak, the mother beat him to it, “Fourth master, my son is correct. The two of us are not ones to live our lives in luxury and nobility. We truly cannot adjust ourselves to such a lifestyle. I wish to use the savings I have to purchase an inn in Lore City and continue my days working there if the fourth master allows it!”

Jian Chen continued to think for a moment, but in the end he valued the opinion of the two and sighed, “Very well then. If aunty and Sans wish to live such a lifestyle, I can only support your endeavors. Aunty, I will have uncle Chang take care of the arrangements, so you needn’t worry about the matters with the inn for now.”

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An extremely far distance away from the Gesun Kingdom, a suspended shrine could be seen floating a hundred meters up in an empty space.

“Grand elder, we have recently discovered the men from the Bloodsword Sect moving about, but they are mostly moving around the coastal areas in frequent amounts.” An elder cupped his hands respectfully. Right in front of him was a middle-aged man that floated in mid-air, this was the uncle Tian of Ming Dong — Tian Jian!

“Bloodsword Sect!” Tian Jian’s eyebrows narrowed together. “It

has been a thousand years since their last movement on the continent. If they're appearing now near the coast, just what in the world are they planning?"

"Grand elder, could the Bloodsword Sect possibly be planning something big?" Another elder wondered aloud.

Muttering to himself, Tian Jian spoke, "It has been a thousand years since Houston retired from the Tian Yuan Continent to live in seclusion without a care for the continent. If the Bloodsword Sect is appearing out of nowhere now..." Tian Jian's eyes narrowed as he thought.

After a while, Tian Jian sighed and smoothed out his eyebrows. "Twenty-third elder, from now on, report these matters to the second and third elder. There is no need to report to me."

"Yes, grand elder!" The elder retreated afterward.

After the elder had left, Tian Jian's legs fell to the ground to let him walk. His hands were placed behind his back as he stared at the murky sky with a spellbound look.

# Chapter 528: The Huanggu Clan

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Within the Changyang clan, Jian Chen gathered Ming Dong, Dugu Feng, Yun Zheng, and Senior An all together around a round table.

Jian Chen looked around the table with a glint before clearing up his thoughts. After muttering to himself, he said, “Now that the problems of the Gesun Kingdom are all but resolved, we all should start to do our own things now.”

Ming Dong’s eyes sparkled, “Jian Chen, are you talking about the Flame Mercenaries?”

“Correct, the Flame Mercenaries is exactly what I’m talking about.” Jian Chen continued, “I returned to the Gesun Kingdom after such a long time, but I also had plans to see just how much the Flame Mercenaries have developed. Yet, with so many problems that got in the way, I had no time to go and check on the mercenaries until today. With everything said and done with, I shall make use of my remaining energy to manage the Flame Mercenaries.”

“Jian Chen, just where did you establish this mercenary group? I have never heard of it before, let alone know how strong it is.” Yun Zheng asked.

“I didn’t create the Flame Mercenaries, I am just merely the second captain. It’s been two years since I left, so if they didn’t change locations, they should still be in Wake City of Blue Wind

Kingdom. As for their strength....” At this point, Jian Chen had an embarrassed smile on his face, “Well, wait until you see it, you’ll understand then.”

“Haha, Jian Chen. I’ve heard that you owned a mercenary group, but I have never heard of it either. We should head to Wake City so I can see just what this mercenary group of yours is like.” Ming Dong chuckled.

“When do we leave?” Dugu Feng spoke. Compared to everyone else, he was more detached. Even when he was speaking, his face was expressionless.

Hearing that, Jian Chen muttered, “Before we head to Wake City, I wish to go somewhere else first. You should all stay in Changyang Manor for a while. Wait for me to return, then we’ll head out.”

Afterward when everyone was about to leave, Jian Chen pulled Ming Dong aside, “Ming Dong, you come with me. I want to introduce a friend to you.”

“Alright, where to then!” Ming Dong asked succinctly.

“Kargath Academy!”

Jian Chen and Ming Dong both left the Changyang clan with Jian Chen carrying him to Kargath Academy.

To the south, there was a forest where magical beasts could be

found littered everywhere. This forest was known as the Misty Forest since there was a dense layer of mist covering the forest throughout the entire year. The deeper one went into the forest, the more dense the mist got, making it very easy for a person to get lost.

According to the records left behind by those before, the Misty Forest used to be an ordinary forest with a decent amount of magical beasts residing within it. But a thousand years later, a sudden mist rolled into it for no reason at all. At first everyone had been curious to know the reason why it appeared, prompting plenty of braggarts and strong mercenaries to head into the forest to investigate. From all that tried, not a single one had returned.

The disappearance of anyone that left for the forest did not strike fear into the hearts of the mercenaries. Instead, it had bolstered them and caused even more mercenaries to believe that there was some sort of treasure within the forest.

Spurred by their greedy hearts, plenty of mercenary groups had banded together to form a large-scale attempt to scour the entire forest. After several days, only a meager few heavily injured men came stumbling out from the forest despite thousands of people enter it. All of them had repeated the same shocking information; within the abyss of the forests, there was Class 6 Magical Beasts!

This piece of information was like a clap of thunder to the hearts of every mercenary there. The cities around the Misty Forest were all Second and Third Class cities where a Class 5 Magical Beast was already far too strong of an entity. A Class 6 Magical Beast was an entity they could only look up to. A beast like that could destroy a

Second Class city with ease.

All of the surrounding kingdoms had quickly received this information, prompting them all to dispatch plenty of Heaven Saint Masters. They were to rapidly respond to the abyss of the Misty Forest in hopes of killing and extracting their monster cores. On the Tian Yuan Continent, Class 6 Magical Beasts were existences that only lived in the Cross Mountains. In the eyes of humanity, the Cross Mountains were a forbidden zone where anyone beneath a Heaven Saint Master was guaranteed to die there. Thus, Class 6 Magical Beasts were very rare to see outside of it. Whenever one did appear, every nearby party would immediately head out to hunt it.

Every single Heaven Saint Master that had gone into the forest had come out with dismayed expressions without exception. There had been no sounds of battle the entire time they were in the forest, leaving every single spectator, who were looking forward to seeing the Heaven Saint Masters battle, disappointed. The deterrence brought forth by the Misty Forest had multiplied in the hearts of the mercenaries because of this situation. Soon, rumors were spread throughout the land, and although they weren't enough to shake the continent, practically every single person within hundreds of thousands of kilometers knew about the situation.

From that moment on, every mercenary knew that there was something hidden within the Misty Forest that scared even Heaven Saint Masters away. While many mercenaries would still hunt for magical beasts in the Misty Forest, they would stay in the outer area. No one dared to go deeper in it.



Aside from the Heaven Saint Masters who entered the forest, not a single person would be able to imagine that hidden within the deepest parts of the forest would be a giant building. There were several other buildings built around it, but the mist never reached into the area of these buildings.

Within the center of these buildings, there was a single tower that was about a kilometer in height. On the first story, several elders could be seen smiling and chatting. Among this group were the elders Feng and Yun from the Huang family.

“Elder Feng, Elder Yun, it is rare to see the two of you come by my Huanggu family. Why don’t you stay for some time within my household?” A crane-hairstyled elder spoke. This elder wore a plain white robe, but there was the air of a scholar to him.

“Lord Jiang, the two of us always come by here for a reason. This time, it is for an important matter.” Elder Feng spoke with a difficult expression as if he found what he was about to say quite embarrassing.

“Haha, just what matter could it be for you two elders to personally come running over? Did the Hongfu clan do something new?” The head of the Huanggu clan asked.

Elder Feng shook his head before taking out a letter from his Space Ring to give to the head, “Lord Jiang, please take a look.”

The head of the Huanggu clan took the letter and opened it up. When he saw the inner contents of the letter, the smile on his face

was wiped away, forming a difficult expression. With a low voice, he said, “Your Huang family has decided to absolve the betrothment? Elder Feng, Elder Yun, just what is the meaning of your Huang family?”

The two elders revealed apologetic smiles as they cupped their hands, “Lord Jiang, please calm yourself. This decision came from our ancestor himself.”

Upon hearing mention of the ancestor, the face of lord Jiang grew even more serious. Tossing the letter onto the table, he spoke with a still difficult expression, “Elders, what does your ancestor mean by this! This betrothment was suggested to us by him, and now he wishes to cancel it, does he see my Huanggu clan as something to tease?”

“Lord Jiang, we truly are sorry. There is already another in the heart of our young miss, so our Huang family does not wish to forcibly break her heart. Thus, this betrothment should be dropped. If we offended the Huanggu clan in anyway, please forgive us.” Elder Yun spoke apologetically.

“Hmph, what kind of young lord could your young miss possibly fall in love with that would have your ancestor break off this betrothment?” The head of the Huanggu clan inquired.

“The man our young miss has taken a liking to is the Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom.” Elder Feng spoke with a faint smile. His heart could already predict just what type of expression the head of the Huanggu clan would make.

Sure enough, upon hearing mention of the Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom, the face of the man showed some fear run through it. Then he revealed a cold smile, "Is that so. So your Huang family has found the tree known as the Qinhuang Kingdom to climb. Indeed, with the Qinhuang Kingdom, your Huang family wouldn't fear the threat known as the Hongfu clan." There was fury that could barely be contained within the lord's heart. The young miss Huang Luan possessed an exceptional talent. At the age of twenty she had already reached the realm of an Earth Saint Master. This was something the Huanggu clan had highly favored. They had tried an infinitesimal amount of ways to get her into their clan, but the Huang family had constantly rejected them.

It was finally after half a year when the Hongfu clan greatly changed that caused the Huang family to feel pressured. It had been so much that they had taken the initiative to try and link their family to the Huanggu clan by marriage in an attempt to combine their power to deter the Hongfu clan from starting anything.

This proposal had been something that the Huanggu clan had been all too happy to accept. If their Huanggu clan could join with the Huang family, then their combined power could plateau with the Hongfu clan and scare them away from attacking. In the case that a fight broke out while the two sides were of equal strengths, then it would only lead to an internecine aftermath. There was no way the Hongfu clan would dare risk that.

It could be said that this marriage between the Huang family and the Huanggu clan was for the sake of military deterrence and not for actual warfare with the Hongfu clan. For that reason, the

Huanggu clan had been delighted to agree to this marriage. Now that the Huang family had decided to break off this marriage, the leader of the Huanggu clan was all too displeased. They had valued Huang Luan quite highly and the person she was supposed to be married to was the dearly loved son of lord Jiang. There was no way he wouldn't be angry about this.

“Elders, please excuse yourselves. I must bring this matter to my ancestor to report so that he may speak to your own ancestor for the reason.” Lord Jiang waved his hand with a temperament similar to the way an emperor would expel foreigners from his lands.

## Chapter 529: Return To Kargath Academy

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Without any other choice, the elders Feng and Yun left the Huanggu clan. The head of the clan remained there with his eyes narrowed together in thought. Soon, he headed up the tallest level of the tower. The Huanggu clan highly valued Huang Luan so much that even the ancestor for their clan was highly interested in having her as an addition to their clan. With the sudden absolvment, it was imperative that the clan leader announce this matter to him.

The man walked up to the highest tower before coming to a stop at the closed doors. With a respectful voice, he said, “Descendant Jiang Tao is here with a report for the ancestor.”

After a heavy layer of silence, an elderly voice could be heard from the other side, “Speak!”

“Ancestor, the Huang family has cancelled the betrothment between Huang Luan and our Huanggu clan. In our place, they have chosen an Imperial Protector from the Qinhuang Kingdom.” Jiang Tao replied respectfully.

“What? Canceling the betrothment for an Imperial Protector from the Qinhuang Kingdom!?” The tone from the elderly man on the other side of the door was noticeably angry.

Hearing the angry voice of the elder, Jiang Tao was slightly confused. Although he knew that the ancestor highly valued Huang Luan, he never expected to see that the ancestor would be

so influenced by her to such a degree.

Despite his confusion, he didn't dare ask about it. Instead, he replied, "Yes Ancestor. The men from the Huang family just came by with the news."

Another silence descended behind the doors. After a while, a voice could be heard again, "Very well. I know now, you may leave!" This time, the elderly voice had calmed down.

"Yes Ancestor! Descendant Jiang Tao will take his leave!" Jiang Tao gave a respectful bow to the door before heading back down.

After Jiang Tao left, the doors began to slowly open to reveal a blue-robed elder with a dark expression. As he walked out, his eyebrows could be seen furrowed together.

"The Huang family has matched that Huang Luan girl to the Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom, did that Imperial Protector find out that girl possesses the water spirit's body? No, there's no way. Unless he practices the Scripture of the Aqua Sunflower, he shouldn't have any possible way to see the secrets of the water spirit's body." The ancestor muttered to himself. After some hesitation, he finally bit his lip, "No, the water spirit's body is far too important. I must investigate this matter." The elder instantly disappeared into a flash of light that escaped from his tower and out into the misty forest.

From far within the borders of the Gesun Kingdom, Jian Chen flew with Ming Dong for a thousand kilometers before finally

arriving at their destination — Kargath Academy.

Descending to the area around Kargath Academy, the two of them began to walk in. As soon as they were about to walk past the gates, the guard at the gates immediately blocked their path.

“My lords, please show me proof of studentship here. Otherwise, I cannot let you in, these are the regulations of this academy.” The guard could tell from the luxurious clothes and the aura of the two that they were very important people, so he spoke in a more respectful voice.

Jian chen smiled and took out a badge from his Space Ring, “Are we allowed in now?” In the past, Jian Chen had been a student of Kargath Academy, so it was only natural that he still had proof of him being a student.

“Please enter my lords!” With that, the guard stopped the two no more. He gave a wave and a smile.

Without any other problems, Jian Chen and Ming Dong entered Kargath Academy. Despite Jian Chen being gone for so long, Kargath Academy hadn’t changed at all. The biggest change was that the trees that had been planted a long time ago at the academy had grown by a large amount.

It was quite lively within Kargath Academy as countless students could be seen laughing and walking around the campus. Many of there were around the age of eighteen and nineteen; sometimes an even older student would appear.

“Jian Chen, is this really the academy you used to study at? It doesn’t seem like much; some of these students are barely at the Saint level — some don’t even have a Saint Weapon materialized!” Ming Dong spoke with some disbelief as he looked around the place.

Jian Chen laughed, “Do you think that everyone is like you and can become an Earth Saint Master at your age? Although there are many geniuses on the Tian Yuan Continent, the Gesun Kingdom is a tiny place. Just having one or two appear would be amazing enough, how could there be multiple?”

Ming Dong found Jian Chen’s words reasonable and agreed. “That much is true, but Jian Chen, just who did you bring me here to find? Is it someone that has caught your eye in skill?”

“You’ll find out in a moment. Let’s go find the headmaster for now; he’ll know the whereabouts of the friend I have in the academy. This friend of mine has a decent talent. He seems to even be blessed. His physical strength is something even I greatly admire.” Jian Chen admitted.

“Haha, if you say it like that, then I really want to meet this friend of yours.” Ming Dong laughed with interest.

The two of them continued on their way to the tower at center of the academy. This was the most authoritative place of power within the academy, and was where the headmaster Khafir would be.



Just at that moment, a clamor could be heard.

“Everyone come quickly! The second strongest student, Ka Di Yun has challenged the strongest student to a fight! This will be a stupendous battle that can absolutely not be missed!”

“What? Ka Di Yun challenging the first seat? Didn’t Ling Zhengtian make the breakthrough to become a Saint Master half a year ago? Ka Di Yun is only a High Great Saint, isn’t he only inviting humiliation to himself with this challenge?”

“What do you know? According to the rumors, Ka Di Yun made the breakthrough to become a Saint Master half a month ago. His strength is practically on par with Ling Zhengtian!”

“That can’t be, Ka Di Yun made a breakthrough to become a Saint Master? That rate of cultivation speed is far too fast. He’s only younger than Ling Zhengtian by two years, how could he become a Saint Master so quickly? He’s practically the fastest cultivator within Kargath Academy!”

“Bah, who’s the one that said Ka Di Yun is the fastest cultivator in Kargath Academy? Have you all never heard about the eldest son of the Changyang clan, Changyang Hu? He is a fellow student of ours and made the breakthrough to become a Great Saint Master last year. He left Kargath Academy after that, otherwise, no student would be a match for him aside from the teachers here.”

“Che! Who cares for Changyang Hu? Did you not hear about the

fourth master of the same clan, Changyang Xiangtian? I heard that he was once a student within our Kargath Academy. As soon as he entered, he became the champion of the newcomer students that year. His strength is far too amazing, and I bet no one in the academy could contend with him.”

“Changyang Xiangtian? Aiya, I know about him!” A single eighteen year old girl had immediately leaped up and down at the mention of Changyang Xiangtian’s name. “I know of Changyang Xiangtian, he’s currently the Imperial Protector for our Gesun Kingdom. That means his status is even higher than the headmaster! I heard that he’s at the Heaven Saint Master realm as well, that’s just far too amazing! He only just became twenty years old or so as well.”

“What? Just barely twenty years old and already a Heaven Saint Master as well as the Imperial Protector for our Gesun Kingdom? You’re dreaming. How could that be possible? Even the most talented person wouldn’t be able to become a Heaven Saint Master at the age of twenty.” Another male student spoke in disbelief as doubt clouded his words.

Many of the surrounding students began to give the doubtful student a very perplexed glance. Then one person spoke, “Fellow classmate, have you not moved out from your hole in the ground or something? Just who doesn’t know about the grand name of Changyang Xiangtian, the fourth master of the Changyang clan? This is a fact that has been undeniably proved true without a chance to be considered false.”

Another person piped in, “I heard that Changyang Xiangtian

earned some animosity with Ka Di Yun when he first entered Kargath Academy, I don't know if that's true or not though."

"That's correct, something like that had truly happened." One of the older students spoke confidently with his hands on his hips. "I saw when Changyang Xiangtian entered the academy. In the newcomer tournament, Changyang Xiangtian defeated Ka Di Liang and Ka Di Qiuli for the title of first place. Both Ka Di Liang and Ka Di Qiuli were unable to accept this defeat and challenged Changyang Xiangtian again. But still, they lost. In the end, even Ka Di Yun who had only just materialized his Saint Weapon had challenged him. Yet, like his family members, he lost to the hands of Changyang Xiangtian. I heard at that point Changyang Xiangtian was only at the Eight Saint Force layer."

"Waa... is that true or not? Changyang Xiangtian is too amazing then..." Every single student around the area let out a surprised sigh of worship after hearing that.

"What are you all talking about here!?" Suddenly, a cold voice could be heard as a cyan-colored skirt wearing girl stood on the outskirts of the crowd. She shot an icy glare at everyone.

This woman was exceedingly pretty with delicate features. Although she was not so beautiful to bring a country to its knees, she was still quite the beauty that could rarely be seen. By the woman's side was another rather handsome looking youth that looked to be around twenty-two to twenty-three years old.

As this male and female walking forward, all of the students that had been gossiping had immediately gone quiet. Straight away,

many of the students began to greet the two with a flattering laugh.

“So it’s sis Ka Di Qiuli and senior Ka Di Liang!”

“Sis Ka Di Qiuli, senior Ka Di Liang, hello!”

As of right now, the three siblings from the Ka Di clan were Kargath Academy’s most influential figures. Practically every single student that attended the academy would know their names since the three siblings were all very strong. Ka Di Yun had been able to become a Saint Master and was on par with the strongest student in the academy. Ka Di Qiuli and Ka Di Yun were both cultivators at the same level of strength

They were Advanced Great Saints with just a small marginal step until the Saint Master realm. Of the top ten strongest students in Kargath Academy, the three siblings held three spots.

“Third sister, don’t bother with them. Big brother’s match is about to begin. We should hurry to where brother is about to fight.” Ka Di Liang spoke to Ka Di Qiuli by his side. Then pulling Ka Di Qiuli in the direction of the fighting arenas, the two of them left with a rather unwell expression on their faces.

As Ka Di Qiuli was being pulled away by Ka Di Liang, an unhappy smile could be seen on her face. In her mind, she was still unable to forget about the dissatisfaction brought by Changyang Xiangtian several years ago. The two siblings were quite aware of the matters of the outside world, but she would never be able to believe that the Changyang Xiangtian she and her brother had once fought against would rise by such a terrifying degree in such a short

amount of time.

A Heaven Saint Master was something the three siblings could only look up and dream about.

The students who had been discussing among each other quite energetically followed the two siblings toward the area where the fighting arenas where. Just several meters away, Jian Chen and Ming Dong were easily within earshot of the entire exchange.

“Jian Chen, I didn’t think that you would be such a influential person in such a place. Tsk tsk tsk, how amazing you are if you were actually able to defeat a Saint with a Saint Weapon when you were only at the Eighth Layer. That’s even better than I was at your age.” Ming Dong teased Jian Chen from the side.

Hearing that, Jian Chen couldn’t help but think back to the memories of the past with a faint smile. “A child can only play house at such an age, it’s not worth mentioning. In the past, the three Ka Di siblings had an interesting situation between us. Now that so many years have past, I didn’t think that the three siblings would still be here in the academy. Come on, let’s go see what’s happening.”

## Chapter 530: Seeing Tie Ta Again (One)

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By the time Jian Chen and Ming Dong arrived at the arenas, the surrounding area was already packed with students. Hundreds of them were whispering to one another around the ring, but both Ka Di Yun and Ling Zhengtian were nowhere near to be seen.

The match between Ka Di Yun and Ling Zhengtian seemed to be extremely important to the audience. Jian Chen waited for a moment longer, and in just a short amount of time, the crowd of students grew more and more into the thousands until it seemed as if the majority of the students in the academy had gathered.

“Who do you think’s going to win?”

“Are you kidding? Of course it’ll be Ling Zhengtian. Ka Di Yun may have become a Saint Master and is on equal footing with Ling Zhengtian now, but Ling Zhengtian has been a Saint Master for so long. With his talent, I bet he’s already a middle Saint Master in strength, Ka Di Yun’s no match for him.”

“Ka Di Yun has challenged every single one of the top ten students without a single loss. Now that he’s challenging Ling Zhengtian, I’ve no doubts that he’ll win.”

All of the students around the arena were whispering to each other in excitement. Jian Chen and Ming Dong could only stand in the middle of the ocean of people and wait to see the spectacle. Jian Chen and Ming Dong were both extremely conspicuous with their white robes because every student here was wearing the

academy uniform. Some of the students had even looked at them in amazement, but no one asked about them.

While standing among the crowd with both hands against his chest, Jian Chen suddenly felt a distinct pair of eyes staring at him. When he turned his head to look, he only saw a rather beautiful woman staring attentively at him. Her eyes were like limpid autumn water in the light, but the expression in them carried a questioning glance — it was Ka Di Qiuli.

Compared to a few years ago, Ka Di Qiuli had grown by quite the amount. Gone was her unruliness and impatience, and in its place was a more matured steadfastness. Even her beauty had grown by a decent amount.

Although there had been some bad history between Jian Chen and the three siblings from the Ka Di clan, it was nothing more than small time scuffles between children — harmless and of no major importance. This meant that Jian Chen bore no grudges against the three, so when Ka Di Qiuli was staring at him, Jian Chen only gave a friendly nod to her in greeting before turning his eyes away.

Ka Di Qiuli stared attentively at the handsome face of Jian Chen with a thoughtful look. Her eyebrows furrowed together for a moment before lightly nudging Ka Di Liang by her side. “Second brother, have you seen that man wearing the white robe before? I feel he looks somewhat familiar as if I’ve seen him before. I just can’t put my finger on it.”

Jian Chen had grown so much in these years that even his uncle

Chang Wuji had been unable to recognize him, let alone Ka Di Qiuli who wasn't familiar with him at all.

Ka Di Liang looked to Jian Chen after being prompted by his sister. Then, with a shake of his head, he smiled. "I don't know just which son of nobility he is from, but he's quite handsome. Your second brother is quite jealous."

"Second brother, I feel that he is familiar to me, but I just don't know how and where. Do you not know who he is?" Ka Di Qiuli repeated.

Ka Di Liang looked back at Jian Chen again with another shake of his head, "I don't know, or else I've never seen him before." With that, Ka Di Liang gave a meaningful stare at Ka Di Qiuli as he smiled mischievously, "Third sister, that guy over there isn't too bad in looks, are you trying to tell me you've taken a fancy to him. When we get back, your brother will have some people look into who he is for you."

With a baleful glare at Ka Di Liang, Ka Di Qiuli wasted no more words with him and continued to think to herself.

At that time, two figures suddenly came walking out from behind the crowd and onto the arena platform. These two men looked to be around twenty-five and twenty-six years old. They wore the uniform of Kargath Academy, and the moment they stepped onto the arena, the entire congregation exploded into discussions.

"Ka Di Yun and Ling Zhengtian have arrived..."



“Ka Di Yun, you can do it! Beat Ling Zhengtian....”

“Ling Zhengtian will win...”

One after another the students of the academy shouted out in loud voices to cheer on the two combatants. Their voices continued for a decent amount of time before finally descending back into a lull.

With the two fighters stepping onto the arena, Ka Di Qiuli had finally moved her eyes away from Jian Chen to look at her older brother Ka Di Yun on the platform.

Ka Di Yun and Ling Zhengtian exchanged several words of smalltalk with each other before simultaneously taking out their Saint Weapons. Ka Di Yun’s Saint Weapon was a two-handed sword while Ling Zhengtian’s was a long thin saber. With the appearance of their Saint Weapons, the fight had officially started.

“Ding ding clank clank clank...”

The sounds of the Saint Weapons smashing into each other could be heard while Ka Di Yun fought with Ling Zhengtian on top of the arena. Despite not being a fight to the death, their performance was something that seemed to make the students fall into a drunken stupor. A battle between Saint Masters was something that the Saints and not-yet Saints felt invigorated by.

Ka Di Yun and Ling Zhengtian fought for a while on top of the arena without victory being decided. However, Ming Dong had long since lost interest in the battle and did not wish to watch anymore. With him being an Earth Saint Master, watching two Saint Masters fight in front of him was like watching a kid show off to a professional. There was nothing to feel excited about from watching this.

“Tsk, I’ll show you the strength of my battle skill!” Just at that moment, Ka Di Yun let out a loud shout and began to charge his Saint Force into his two-handed sword before slashing out at Ling Zhengtian.

Upon hearing the words ‘battle skill’, Ling Zhengtian’s face had blanched. With no time to dodge, he could only commit all of his strength to defending.

“Bang!” A loud explosion could be heard as Ka Di Yun’s giant sword slammed against Ling Zhengtian’s saber. A battle skill was many times stronger than any regular strike, so the amount of power transmitted from Ka Di Yun’s sword to Ling Zhengtian’s saber had been enough to send Ling Zhengtian back through the air. Finally coming to a stumble across the floor, Ling Zhengtian couldn’t help but let out a mouthful of blood.

The audience, which had been quiet for some time, abruptly exploded into a cacophony of shouts as they began to shout out celebrations of Ka Di Yun being the victor.

“Ka Di Yun has won, Ka Di Yun has defeated Ling Zhengtian to become the strongest student in Kargath Academy!”

“Ka Di Yun is the strongest expert of our academy!”

.....

Beneath the platform, Ka Di Qiuli and Ka Di Liang displayed ecstatic looks on their faces in excitement for the victory their older brother had just received.

Ka Di Yun stabbed his giant sword into the ground for everyone to see before shouting out in a heroicly. “Is there still anyone that isn’t convinced? Come up and challenge me then! Today, I Ka Di Yun will accept the challenge of anyone!”

“Even the strongest student Ling Zhengtian was defeated by the hands of Ka Di Yun. Right now in Kargath Academy, there’s no one that’s a match for Ka Di Yun!”

“Ka Di Yun has a battle skill, making him stronger than even some of the teachers at the academy. I bet even some of the teachers at the Earth Saint Master level wouldn’t be a match for him.”

Many of the students were whispering to each other.

Seeing how prideful Ka Di Yun was, Ming Dong suddenly felt an idea hit him. Smiling, he said, “How impudent. I know I heard that he and you had some bad blood in the past. Jian Chen, let me play with him.” Not even waiting for Jian Chen to respond, Ming Dong

leaped onto the arena.

Seeing Ming Dong hop onto the platform, Jian Chen couldn't do anything but shake his wistful head helplessly since he knew he couldn't stop him. A mighty Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master bullying a single Saint Master, this was something that would make anyone a joke just for saying it.

Ming Dong folded his arms across his chest as he smiled at the proud-looking Ka Di Yun, "Kid, you're Ka Di Yun right? Let's fight, me and you."

When everyone saw Ming Dong suddenly leap on top of the arena, every single student in the audience began to chat with each other. Since he was not wearing the uniform of Kargath Academy, everyone was curious to see who he was while Ka Di Liang and Ka Di Qiuli stared closely at him.

"Who is that guy? I've never seen him before. He's not wearing our academy uniform. It doesn't seem like he's a student of Kargath Academy." Ka Di Liang muttered with furrowed eyebrows. Motioning for the student next to him, he whispered, "Go call for headmaster Bai En, tell him there's outsiders intruding in on Kargath Academy's business."

"Yes!" That student was the son of the family responsible for guarding the Ka Di clan. He didn't hesitate to obey Ka Di Liang's order. In a flash, he began to run to the headmaster's quarters.

Ka Di Yun looked at the white robes of Ming Dong with

suspicious eyes before probing out with a question, “Are you not a student of Kargath Academy?”

“You guessed correctly. I am not a student of Kargath Academy, so this fight shouldn’t pose a risk to your standing in the academy whether you win or lose. So, how about it. Want to fight?” Ming Dong laughed with his arms pressed against his chest.

“Of course we’ll fight! I, Ka Di Yun, fear no single person. But, what is your name?” Ka Di Yun cupped his hands together.

“I’ll tell you my name after our match.” Ming Dong laughed. He wasn’t worried at all; this was nothing more than a joke to play with.

Ka Di Yun could see that he wasn’t too far away in age from Ming Dong, so he did not fear Ming Dong’s strength. Very few people his age would be capable of beating him.

“Despite you not being a student of Kargath Academy, I will nonetheless accept your challenge, let’s fight!” Ka Di Yun’s right hand grabbed his Saint Weapon, which had been stuck in the ground. He adopted a fighting stance while charging at Ming Dong.

## Chapter 531: Seeing Tie Ta Again (Two)

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Ming Dong smiled happily at Ka Di Yun, but he made no moves to take out his Saint Weapon, “Just so that people won’t say I was bullying children, I won’t be too excessive. How about this, I’ll stand here without moving and without striking back. If you can force me back or cause me to even take a single step back, I’ll have lost. Sound good?” Ming Dong began to deemphasize himself; as an Earth Saint Master, he would really not be able to put a tiny Saint Master as an opponent in his eyes. Even if a battle skill was used, it wouldn’t pose even an iota of a threat to him. The difference in power was just that big.

Ming Dong’s words were spoken very casually, but everyone in the audience was able to hear them loud and clear. Regarding Ming Dong as some sort of lunatic, some of the more violent students couldn’t help but curse him out.

“Who does this kid think he is? How f\*cking cocky...”

“He doesn’t look too different than Ka Di Yun in age, if he’s really talking like that, it won’t just be death that he’ll get...”

“Who does he think he is? Even some of the teachers in our academy wouldn’t dare speak to a battle skill wielder like Ka Di Yun”

.....

The arena had descended into a series of cursing as plenty of the

more fiery students began to use their fingers to point at Ming Dong's nose and chew him out. Ka Di Liang and Ka Di Qiuli both stared at him with narrowed eyes, but the fury in them was hardly invisible.

“What an egotistical kid, he's actually speaking to big brother with such haughty words. Big brother has a battle skill, that prevents even an advanced Great Saint Master from making the same claims as he does. Unless he's an Earth Saint Master.” After that, Ka Di Liang's eyes revealed a look of contempt in them before snorting, “But that's impossible. He doesn't look too different in age compared to big brother. If he's stronger than big brother, I don't doubt that, but there's no way he'd be at the Earth Saint Master level.”

Ka Di Qiuli was muttering to herself with knit eyebrows as she stared at the confident look on Ming Dong's face. There was a feeling of unrest welling up within her, so she couldn't help but speak with worry, “Second brother, do you see how relaxed he looks? Do you think he'll have something to rely on?”

“Second sister, you worry too much. Even if he has something to fallback on, just what could he use to take big brother's attack without damage? The way I see it, that outsider came here for the express purpose of challenging him. After this, I'll make sure to investigate his background thoroughly and just what his history is if he is willing to try and make things difficult for our Ka Di clan.” Ka Di Liang coldly spoke.

On the arena platform, Ka Di Yun's face had turned quite difficult to look at as he stared dangerously at Ming Dong, “Your

Majesty, you seem quite arrogant.”

“It is because I have the advantage to make me arrogant!” Ming Dong continued to smile.

Ka Di Yun’s face grew even darker. To his ears, Ming Dong’s words were without a doubt a challenge to him.

“Very well then. Allow me to see just what skill Your Majesty has then.” Ka Di Yun spoke angrily. Without another word, his giant two-hander flew toward Ming Dong to cut him down.

The giant sword carried a strong amount of Saint Force with it as it flew through the air toward Ming Dong’s waist with a faint whistling sound from its speed.

Ming Dong’s previous actions had clearly infuriated Ka Di Yun, and combined with the fact that he was a foreigner and not a student of Kargath Academy, Ka Di Yun held nothing back in this all-or-nothing strike.

Ming Dong still displayed a giddy smile on his face as he watched Ka Di Yun charge at him with his giant two-handed sword. He was still relaxed since such a strike wasn’t something he would even register as a threat.

As soon as the giant sword was about to chop down his waist, Ming Dong raised his right hand. Although this movement had been done very casually to him, it was practically fast beyond belief



to the outside observers.

Ming Dong's right hand was enveloped in a faint layer of the wind-attributed Saint Force. In that split-second, his forefinger and thumb had pinched together. In between those fingers, the giant two-hander had been caught.

Ka Di Yun's eyes abruptly dilated in disbelief at how Ming Dong had used two fingers to stop his sword. Even his heart began to surge with emotions as if he was in peril.

"Y-yo... you caught my Saint Weapon with two fingers!" Ka Di Yun couldn't help but exclaim in astonishment. His entire face was painted with a look of shock.

Ming Dong gave a mischievous smile, "What's so alarming about that? Kid, do you dare say I'm arrogant now?"

Ka Di Yun's face was quickly growing a pale-green color as his eyes flashed with a dangerous gleam, "Just who are you, and why are you trying to make things difficult for me?"

"I have no grievances with you, I merely wanted to play around with you and see the skill of the person that dared challenge my brother in the past. As for who I am, defeat me and I'll naturally tell you." Ming Dong displayed a ruminating look on his face as he released the sword that had been clamped with his fingers. "Continue to attack. Use your full strength. Only then will you have a sliver of a chance of forcing my hand. Naturally, you don't need to worry. I won't bully a child, so you won't have to fear

getting injured.”

This time, Ka Di Yun was not infuriated by the humiliating and condescending tone of Ming Dong. After this exchange, he had already come to realize just how strong Ming Dong was compared to him.

Ka Di Yun’s hands gripped his giant sword tightly as he glared at Ming Dong as if he was a viper. With a loud shout, he once again utilized his battle skill. His giant sword once more rippled with Saint Force as it shot toward Ming Dong. A Saint Master using a battle skill would usually mean that it was the lowest tiers of the Human Tier Battle Skill, but even a Great Saint Master wouldn’t be able to receive it head-on.

Ming Dong’s hand began to flow with an even richer amount of wind-attributed Saint Force now. Just as the giant sword of Ka Di Yun was about to strike Ming Dong down, his hand flashed out and slapped the blade of the sword with incomparable precision.

“Pa!” The crisp sound of the palm striking the sword could be heard. In front of Ming Dong, the amount of accumulated energy in the sword had been like an ant to him that could effortlessly be displaced with a single palm strike. Furthermore, the energy transmitted to the Saint Weapon from the strike forced Ka Di Yun to stagger back several meters while the arms holding his sword began to shake and go numb.

Ka Di Yun could only stare at Ming Dong who was in front of him with wide-open eyes of shock. The waves in his heart reached a frenzied height instead of calming down from the sight in front of

him. He could hardly believe his eyes when the very first strike, Ming Dong had clamped down on his sword with just two fingers despite Ka Di Yun using all of his strength. Then, even after using his battle skill to the fullest efficiency, his opponent had only needed a single slap for the energy in the sword to be scattered before it could be released. The strength of his opponent was so strong that it shocked Ka Di Yun down to his core.

Ka Di Yun was not the only one to be shocked at this scene. The entire audience had gone absolutely silent with thousands of students standing nearly transfixed at the spot, just staring at the arena. Many of them had expression of disbelief on their faces. At this moment, Jian Chen may have very well been the only person to keep his calm out of thousands of people. Though, even he revealed a look of helplessness and a forced smile.

Clapping his hands, Ming Dong looked at Ka Di Yun with a smile. Beckoning for him with a finger, he spoke, "Come now, let's try again. You just need to put a little more effort to knock me back."

Ka Di Yun could barely keep the dark expression off of his face as he stared at Ming Dong with a disturbed mind. Ming Dong looked to be no older than thirty years old, meaning that they were roughly the same age. Except the strength he possessed was absolutely terrifying. Even after using his battle skill to his fullest, Ka Di Yun had been unable to move Ming Dong. This was something that Ka Di Yun found very hard to accept.

"Sire, this is Kargath Academy. Outsiders are not permitted entry, and yet you have intruded anyways. You even interfered with a competition between students. Those are very serious

violations of the rules of our Kargath Academy, prepare yourself to receive punishment for it!” At that moment, a stringently strict voice could be heard loud and clear through the grounds. At the same time the voice could be heard, a humanoid figure appeared in the blink of an eye before reappearing right in front of Ming Dong.

It was a middle-aged man with a rather ordinary facial appearance. However, the might he contained and the light in his eyes was terrifying. It caused each and every one of the weaker students to feel unable to look at him directly.

“It’s the vice-headmaster, he has arrived...”

Following the appearance of this middle-aged man, the entire audience began to break out in a chorus of welcoming sounds.

The appearance of vice-headmaster Bai En allowed Ka Di Yun to show a relaxed look on his face as well as becoming delighted at the thought of the pain that would befall Ming Dong. Turning to the vice-headmaster, he spoke, “Vice-headmaster, he isn’t a student of our Kargath Academy. Not only did he sneak into our academy grounds, he has meddled with the internal competitions of our academy.”

“I will take care of this matter, you may head down.” Bai En spoke to Ka Di Yun with his back to him. He showed a serious expression to Ming Dong.

Ka Di Yun did not speak another word. Bai En’s appearance had solved his earlier awkward conundrum of being unable to back

out. So with that solved, he hopped off the platform.

“So you’re the vice-headmaster of Kargath Academy, it’s nice to meet you!” Ming Dong smiled and cupped his hands in a polite salute to Bai En.

Bai En did not loosen his expression. Glaring dangerously at Ming Dong, he spoke rather woodenly, “You’ve violated the rules of our Kargath Academy. Come with me to see the headmaster and accept your punishment!”

“Headmaster? Do you mean Khafir?” Ming Dong laughed. He felt no pressure at all since he and Khafir were very well acquainted with one another.

Ming Dong’s casual mention of Khafir’s name caused Bai En’s face to blanch. Furiously, he spoke, “Impudence! For just what reason could the name of the headmaster be said so easily by you?” As soon as his speech ended, Bai En started to move toward Ming Dong with a flash of his sword coming out to stab at him.

## Chapter 532: Seeing Tie Ta Again (Three)

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Vice-headmaster Bai En's sword traveled like an arc of lightning in an attempt to stab Ming Dong. His speed was far too fast for all of the students there to see his movements; even the after-images of the sword were impossible to spot.

Whether it was in speed or power, a battle between Earth Saint Masters would be many times stronger than a battle between Saint Masters. For the students who were merely Saints or perhaps Great Saints, they didn't possess the necessary strength to be able to carefully study this battle between Earth Saint Masters.

Seeing how Bai En was personally taking part in this fight, every single student let out a sudden gasp and focused their eyes on the battle in front of them. Although they wouldn't be able to study the battle in great detail, there was still a fatal attraction to the match. In their eyes, a battle between Earth Saint Masters was all too rare. Also, none of the students had ever seen the vice-headmaster fight.

Ming Dong's figure remained completely still where he stood while Bai En's sword stabbed through his chest without resistance. The students in the audience let out several gasps before crying out in cheers over Bai En's success. Those that didn't know of Ming Dong's strength figured that he had really been pierced through the chest by Bai En's sword.

However, Bai En wasn't cheerful at all. Instead, his expression grew solemn due to the fact that his sword hadn't felt anything at all. His sword had pierced through a mirror image that was already

starting to fade away.

“Vice-headmaster Bai En, you’re too slow! I’m already behind you.” Before Bai En could even turn around, Ming Dong could be heard speaking from behind him.

Bai En was startled at this. He hadn’t sensed Ming Dong make his way behind him at all, and judging from the closeness of the voice, Ming Dong was very close to his back. If Ming Dong were to strike at him, then it would be very hard for Bai En to dodge.

As a veteran of hundreds of battle, there was no hesitation in Bai En’s movements as he slid to the side while simultaneously turning around to stab at Ming Dong behind him.

Ming Dong gently kicked off the platform with his entire body surrounded by wind-attributed Saint Force. Transforming into a cyan light, he easily dodged Bai En’s strike.

However, Bai En continued to chase down Ming Dong. His legs stomped across the platform with a speed like a recently shot arrow to stab his single-handed sword into Ming Dong’s chest.

Ming Dong wasn’t angry. With a meaningful smile to Bai En, he retreated to the very edge of the platform before coming to a sudden stop. Then moving slightly to the left, he flew forward to cross by Bai En’s side from the front. Just as the two crossed paths, Ming Dong’s right palm began to swirl with wind-attributed Saint Force before gently striking Bai En’s back.

Bai En had followed Ming Dong to the very edge of the platform, but it had been hard for him to suddenly stop in his tracks. When Ming Dong had slapped his back, there had been enough forward force in the palm that Bai En was sent flying off the stage thirty meters into the air before he finally dropped to the ground. Even then, the momentum within the strike had not yet fully dissipated. It caused him to tumble across the ground several steps before coming to a miserable stop.

Ming Dong and Bai En's fight had taken place in a split second with several exchanges, but the students hadn't been able to clearly see what the process of the match had been. However, there was one thing that was clear. Ming Dong was still standing on the arena while Bai En had somehow flown out from the arena at some point. According to the regulations of every fight on the arena, if one were to fall from the ring, then they would lose. With Bai En like this, it was very clear to see that he had lost.

When everyone realized the results of the match, every single student could only stare with wide open eyes in disbelief. Everyone could clearly see that their vice-headmaster Bai En had completely this match lost against this unknown stranger.

At this, even the three siblings from the Ka Di clan were speechless. They could only stand there in mute shock as they looked up at the arena. Although the three of them knew that the one standing on the arena was very strong, they didn't ever expect Ming Dong to be strong enough to the point where even the vice-headmaster Bai En would lose to him as well.

“Do... don't tell me... is he actually an Earth Saint Master?” Ka Di



Liang found himself having difficulty speaking with the amount of shock he felt in his heart. Ming Dong looked rather young, close to his own brother in age, so he did not think that Ming Dong would be so strong.

Ka Di Qiuli and Ka Di Yun chose to stare at the arena with disbelieving eyes instead of answering their brother. With that expression on Ming Dong's face, the two of them had begun to feel a dangerous thought well up within them. Could it be that someone like their vice-headmaster Bai En was an insignificant person in comparison to him?

Like the others, Bai En looked back to Ming Dong in astonishment and complete surprise. As one of the two fighters in the match, he clearly felt that Ming Dong's strike had been relatively light despite causing him to lose.

Squashing the shock in his heart, Bai En leaped back onto the stage. With a complicated stare, he then cupped his hands together, "Thank you brother for being lenient!"

The words of Bai En were, to the students, like a bomb that had exploded as it brought another wave of shock to them.

Waving his hands in a carefree manner, Ming Dong spoke, "We are of the same side, and this was nothing more than for entertainment. If I were to really injure you, I'm afraid my brother would not let me off easily."

"Hahahaha. Friends, how could you not send me notice in

advance of your coming? With me leading your welcome in person, would such a misunderstanding like this occur?” Just at that moment, an elderly sounding laugh could be heard from the sky as a white-robed figure descended with a smile.

“It’s the headmaster...”

“The headmaster is here!”

Seeing the elderly figure, every single student immediately grew excited. Headmaster Khafir was an illustrious expert of the Gesun Kingdom that held plenty of prestige in the eyes of the students. However, he was very rarely seen among the students; some of the students had gone four or five years without seeing him even once. So, to see the headmaster now was an event that would cause no small amount of excitement for them.

Descending slowly onto the arena grounds, the headmaster of Kargath Academy gave a soft smile to Ming Dong.

“Headmaster Khafir, I didn’t expect to see you here, haha. This outsider seems to have violated some rule of your academy, I hope you will not grow angry over this.” Ming Dong cupped his hands and smiled back at Khafir.

“No no, how could I be? To have such a friend come sightsee around my Kargath Academy brings honor to it. I don’t even have time to welcome you properly, let alone be angry.” Khafir laughed merrily. Turning to look at Bai En, he spoke, “Bai En, your loss at the hands of my friend here is not wrong. If not for the leniency of

my friend here, you would have fallen off this stage with severe wounds. Do not be as impulsive next time, understand?”

“This one understands.” Bai En gave a respectful answer and turned with a complicated expression to Ming Dong. Feeling curious about Ming Dong’s identity, he cupped his hands and asked, “Might I know what to call this brother here?”

Khafir laughed, “This friend here is called Ming Dong. He is an honored guest of our Gesun Kingdom. Bai En, you should know about the fame of Ming Dong here I presume.”

“Ming Dong?” Bai En was taken back at first for a moment, but then the pondering expression on his face became a shocked one as he exclaimed, “Is he not the very same Earth Saint Master as the one who made use of a Heaven Tier Battle Skill to severely injure enemy Heaven Saint Masters at the northern stronghold, that Ming Dong!?” Bai En had not been quiet with his exclamation; therefore, every single student had been able to hear his words loud and clear, sending them all into an uproar.

“What? He’s that Ming Dong from the northern stronghold?”

“If he’s that Ming Dong, then it’s no wonder he’s that strong...”

“I heard that Ming Dong was already extremely close to becoming a Heaven Saint Master. He only just needs a single step to become one...”

“I heard that with a Heaven Tier Battle Skill, he was able to injure several experts of the Heaven Saint Master realm...”

After the battle of the northern stronghold, Ming Dong's name had been circulated around the Gesun Kingdom like wildfire. Practically everyone and everybody had heard of him, including the students of Kargath Academy. This battle had made him the idol of many students and a person to worship.

After knowing Ming Dong's identity, the faces of Ka Di Yun and his two siblings immediately lit up.

“So he was that Ming Dong? Hahaha, he is the hero that I, Ka Di Yun, admire so much. To lose at his hands, I, Ka Di Yun don't feel wronged at all. Not one bit!” Ka Di Yun gave a hearty laugh, for the bitter taste that was left in his mouth after his defeat had completely vanished.

“Eldest brother, he's... he's actually that Ming Dong!” Ka Di Liang's could only stare in bafflement at Ming Dong with shining eyes. Ming Dong's achievements were extremely known to them. Not only was he an Earth Saint Master at his age, he was also in possession of a Heaven Tier Battle Skill that could injure even Heaven Saint Masters. His militaristic achievements had long since made him a heroic figure to be worshipped in the eyes of the two and a goal that they both wished to reach.

Ka Ki Qiuli looked at Ming Dong with a flabbergasted expression as well. She didn't think that this extremely strong outsider would actually be the famous Ming Dong.

Now that headmaster Khafir had finally arrived, Jian Chen couldn't sit idly to the side any longer. Leaping onto the arena, he smiled and cupped his hands. "Headmaster Khafir, vice-headmaster Bai En!"

Seeing Jian Chen, Khafir let out an excited smile. "Haha, Changyang Xiangtian! From the moment I saw Ming Dong, I knew that you were here as well." Khafir eyed Bai En, "Bai En, this is the Imperial Protector of our Gesun Kingdom and the fourth master of the Changyang clan, Changyang Xiangtian!"

## Chapter 533: Seeing Tie Ta Again (Four)

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Upon hearing the name of Changyang Xiangtian, Bai En's face grew shocked once more. Hurriedly bowing to Jian Chen, he spoke, "Bai En pays his respects to the honored Imperial Protector!"

Although Jian Chen had once been a student of Kargath Academy, his status now was completely different from before. Not only was he a Heaven Saint Master, he was the very first Imperial Protector of the Gesun Kingdom in several hundred years. Compared to before, it was completely useless to try and compare statuses. Even a vice-headmaster like Bai En would have to bow to Jian Chen now.

As soon as the entire audience heard the fact that the white-robed outsider that came along with Ming Dong was the extremely famous Imperial Protector of the Gesun Kingdom, Jian Chen, everyone became stupefied once more. Straight away, a clamor could be heard as they all looked at him with looks of both adoration and fear.

If Ming Dong was a person to be idolized and worshipped in the hearts of the students, Jian Chen was a deity in comparison. One that they could never dare to offend.

In the past, Jian Chen had been a person of influence in Kargath Academy. Even now, the achievements he had accomplished in the academy had been preserved to the present times. The champion of newcomers, the one who had gathered a shockingly large amount of monster cores, and the one who had defeated the Saint

Ka Di Yun despite not even being a Saint himself. Then finally, the very same Saint who had cut off Cheng Mingxiang's arm from the Hua Yun Sect while also forcing several other students to sustain injuries.

Each and every story Jian Chen was mentioned in caused the students of Kargath Academy to become extremely interested.

Now after a span of several short years, Changyang Xiangtian's strength had already reached the realm of the Heaven Saint Masters. Furthermore, he was also the Imperial Protector of the Gesun Kingdom. Such dazzling achievements like the ones that Changyang Xiangtian held were enough for every single student to deify him within their hearts. Even the envious students didn't dare to ever show this on the outside.

The entity that was known as a Heaven Saint Master was an existence that every student could only hope to look at in their lives. This was a boundary that many of them would perhaps never be able to reach in their entire lifetime.

Underneath the arena, Ka Di Qiuli's limpid autumn eyes widened in shock as she looked at the white-robed Changyang Xiangtian with a complicated look of envy.

"H-he's really Changyang Xiangtian? No wonder he felt so familiar to me." Seeing the handsome and positively brimming face of masculinity, Ka Di Qiuli began to mutter to herself. In her mind, she couldn't help but think back to the events that had happened in the past with every possible feeling she had ever felt.

Thinking back, Changyang Xiangtian, her, and her two brothers had only just entered Kargath Academy. Everyone wasn't even a Saint or had barely just become one. It had only been several short years since then. She and her two brothers were now the strongest in Kargath Academy, and her eldest brother Ka Di yun had just recently made the breakthrough to become a Saint Master. They hadn't even left Kargath Academy yet while Jian Chen had, in these short years, become a high and mighty Heaven Saint Master.

Heaven Saint Masters were part of a world where everyone yearned to be.

Now that everyone knew that these two men were Changyang Xiangtian and Ming Dong, the only ones that could be relatively calm were the Ka Di siblings. Ka Di Yun and Ka Di Liang could only look at Jian Chen on the platform with complicated looks. For a long time, they were silent. They both could distinctly remember the rather unhappy feelings between the both of them way back then.

Despite becoming a Heaven Saint Master as well as becoming an Imperial Protector for the Gesun Kingdom, Jian Chen hadn't the slightest air of arrogance to him. Hurriedly lifting Bai En up, they began to speak several words of conversation.

"Ah, Changyang Xiangtian, you've finally returned. Please, come on over to my place and allow me to do the honor as the host." Khafir smiled. Jian Chen coming to Kargath Academy meant that he had not forget about this place. This little insight made Khafir feel joy and pride in his heart.



“Then, I’ll trouble the headmaster with this matter.” Jian Chen cupped his hands with a smile.

“Haha, no worries. No worries at all. You coming here brings great honor to the entire Kargath Academy.” Khafir laughed merrily before slowly ascending into the sky to reach the tower in the center of the academy.

Unwilling to be left behind, Jian Chen began to gather the wind elements in the world to carry him and Ming Dong high into the sky. At a leisurely pace, he began to follow Khafir away from the arena, leaving behind a large group of students that could only look up in envy.

Soon enough, Jian Chen had brought Ming Dong to the tallest point of the tower where Khafir was. This was not only the place where Khafir conducted business, but it was also where he slept and received his guests to talk about several important things.

Khafir walked straight on over to the table and sat down. Calling for the two to sit down with him, he took out a bottle of wine from his Space Ring to serve to the two. “This is a drink that an old friend, who specializes in drinks, distilled for me. Its name is the Hundred Flower Wine; a drink that is made from a hundred different ingredients before being refined and distilled by an expert. It is precious enough that I rarely get to enjoy it. Come, take a sip and see how well the taste suits you.”

Jian Chen and Ming Dong made no motions to be polite and took

the drink to savor. With just a small mouthful, they both let out a sigh of praise, “It is truly a fine wine. Even in the palace, I wasn’t able to drink something as delicious as this.”

Jian Chen had drained his cup in a single gulp. It went without saying that Khafir had brought out an exquisite wine, but compared to the Hundred Grass Wine that the Ape King had bestowed to him, it was still quite lacking.

After finishing his drink, Jian Chen placed the cup gently back on the table. Then, taking out a jade bottle from his Space Ring, he said, “Headmaster Khafir, allow me to treat you to a genuinely matured bottle of wine.” He took out the thousands of year old Hundred Grass Wine. Back then, the Ape King had gifted him roughly ten catty of the drink where Jian Chen had used nine out of the ten to increase his strength. All that was left was this single catty.

The very moment Jian Chen began to pour the Hundred Grass Wine for everyone to drink, a strong smell of wine began to flow out from the cups and fill the entire room.

Smelling the intense scent, the headmaster was startled. “What a wine! It is truly a fine wine. Even the scent alone is enough to make a man drunk from his heart on out. This is an exceptionally excellent wine. Changyang Xiangtian, where did you get such a wine?”

“Woah, Jian Chen, you’ve been hiding such a great wine from us! Quickly, pour us a cup, I want to try!” Ming Dong impatiently pushed his cup to Jian Chen with sparkling eyes.

Laughing, Jian Chen poured Ming Dong a cup, “Slow down a bit. This wine of mine is something even money can’t buy. When I was in the Cross Mountains, I had to spend a great amount of time in order to convince the Ape King of the Spirit Apes to give me some. That was a beast of the Saint Ruler level, I don’t have much of it left, so every little bit counts now.”

Upon hearing that this was the wine given to Jian Chen by an Ape King of the Spirit Apes, Khafir’s entire body began to wrack up as if experiencing a seizure. There was a look of utter disbelief in his eyes as he stared at Jian Chen. The Cross Mountains was a designated forbidden area for humanity. Every single person that entered that area was basically guaranteed to never come back out alive. He hadn’t thought that Jian Chen was not only able to enter, but he was also able to convince a Saint Ruler level individual to hand over such an excellent wine. Such a feat was mind boggling.

Ming Dong didn’t look surprised at all. He already knew that this wine had to be very hard to obtain and simply drank a sip of the Hundred Grass Wine. Then, closing his eyes from the intoxication, he began to relish the sensation of the fine wine entering his body.

Seeing the intoxicated look on Ming Dong’s face, the wine enthusiast Khafir could no longer hold himself back. Pushing away the questions he had, Khafir pursed his lips and took a sip. Straight away, two bright rays of light could be seen in his eyes as he let out a praise of admiration, “Truly a splendid wine. Such a wine like this is something I have never drunk before! After drinking this, I feel as if every single wine I have tasted in my entire life is dull in comparison!” With that, Khafir drained the remaining cup in a single gulp.

Closing his eyes to bask in the intoxicated sensation, Khafir leaned back. This wine could not only increase one's Saint Force, it could also expand the spirit of the drinker. After drinking the wine, Ming Dong and Khafir couldn't help but close their eyes to experience it.

Jian Chen smiled as he looked at the two. When he had drunk the Hundred Grass Wine, he too did the exact same thing as these two.

Suddenly, Jian Chen started. Staring in surprise at the headmaster, he could see that there was a faint layer of the energy of the world gathering around the headmaster's body. The energy of the world began to grow even more intense before finally disappearing into his floating body. At the same time, a strong amount of energy dispersed from him in such a strong wave that it shook Ming Dong from his drunken stupor.

"What's happening?" Seeing how Khafir's body was suddenly floating in the sky, Ming Dong asked Jian Chen in confusion.

Jian Chen slowly pulled Ming Dong away before smiling, "Headmaster Khafir has made a breakthrough."

"What? A breakthrough?" Ming Dong was startled. Looking at the cup of wine in his hands, he let out a look of disbelief, "Don't tell me he made a breakthrough after drinking a cup of wine!"

Jian Chen nodded his head without a word. The effects of the Hundred Grass Wine were something he was all too familiar with.

The headmaster's body continued to disperse waves of energy one after another for some time before finally growing calm. His body gently descended back to the ground before he opened his eyes with apparent joy in them.

“Congratulations to headmaster Khafir for climbing to the next level!” Jian Chen congratulated.

Khafir broke out into a smile, “Hahaha. It is all thanks to this exceptionally fine wine, what a truly magical effect it has! Two years ago, I was at the pinnacle of the Third Cycle, but I found myself unable to make any more progress. I didn't think that today I would be able to break through that bottleneck and become a Fourth Cycle Heaven Saint Master after drinking a cup of wine!”

“Does this wine really have such an effect like that?” Ming Dong was skeptical. Immediately following Khafir's example, he poured the rest of the cup into his mouth and closed his eyes.

Afterward, Ming Dong had finally digested the rest of the wine into his body. Surprised, he spoke, “Although I didn't breakthrough, I can feel my Saint Force growing even stronger. Furthermore, I feel that my willpower has grown stronger as well. This wine... this wine is a priceless treasure that even tens of thousands of gold wouldn't be enough to purchase it!”

“What use is gold? This Hundred Grass Wine is something that only the magical beast clans would have. You won't find such wine outside of their clans.” Jian Chen admonished.

“Jian Chen, pour me another cup!” Ming Dong pushed his cup to Jian Chen with a pitiful look.

Jian Chen placed the jade bottle back into his Space Ring with a pained look. “I don’t have much of this Hundred Grass Wine left, how can I support your drinking habits like this?”

Grimacing, Ming Dong muttered to himself, “If you don’t let me drink, fine then. I’ll wait until I become a Saint Ruler and go to that Spirit Ape for some.”

Jian Chen laughed after listening to Ming Dong’s words. Then turning to Khafir, he said, “Headmaster Khafir, I came this time to seek Tie Ta. After so many years, I wish to see my old friend. Where might Tie Ta be at this moment?”

# Chapter 534: Golden Blood (One)

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Khafir heartily laughed, “So you remember even that child Tie Ta. Unfortunately, Tie Ta left Kargath Academy to return to his hometown two years ago. I originally planned on going to visit him, but I had no time to go on such a trifling visit because of the four kingdoms allying together to attack us. I never found myself having the time to see him.”

“Ai, having said that, I am not qualified to be considered his master. Tie Ta is in a very crucial moment of his youth to be taught and educated, but I have taught him very little.”

“Headmaster Khafir shouldn’t worry himself with that. Despite the straightforwardness of Tie Ta, he is a very capable genius in how he trains himself. There’s no need for a teacher to guide him, he should be able to accomplish plenty with what he can teach himself. All that’s left for him is to gain experience, but that is something that can be gained later. As long as he experiences true combat, he’ll begin to improve rapidly.” Jian Chen laughed.

Khafir gave a nod of agreement, “I remember that Tie Ta once said to me that his hometown was in a small mountain village. I believe he said it was located a thousand or so kilometers to the north on a mountain that has a small city halfway up. I’m not too clear where it is precisely.”

A bright idea suddenly occurred to Jian Chen. He hastily brought out a map of the entire Gesun Kingdom and placed on the table as he began to inspect it.

Soon enough, Jian Chen found the corresponding topography that Khafir had spoken about. Pointing at the area, he declared, “This should be the place. There is a Third Class City here halfway up the mountains. I believe that Tie Ta’s residence will be somewhere nearby.”

Khafir looked at the place Jian Chen pointed at and nodded, “Yes, it should be in that general proximity.”

They left a short time later. Jian Chen stowed away the map back into his Space Ring and bade farewell to Khafir. He brought Ming Dong and him through the air as they rush in the direction of the mountain city.

With Jian Chen’s speed, it took roughly two hours before the two arrived at the small city. This Third Class city was known as “Loess City” and was established on a mountain with a area that was smaller than Wake City by a small amount. It was rather simple and crude with even the most rudimentary city walls left incomplete. Even the marbled roads that paved the streets were riddled with stones that peeked through the streets and made it hard for carts to travel over.

For the sake of not causing a disturbance, Jian Chen and Ming Dong had descended from the sky onto a path that would lead them to the city.

After entering it, Jian Chen walked into a store that sold all kinds of meat and placed down a gold coin. “Shopkeeper, I’d like to ask you about a person. As long as you tell me what I need to know, this gold coin will be yours.”



Even the devil himself would turn rocks for money, especially if it was just for such a tiny inquiry. A gold coin to the butcher was enough profit to cover several days worth of work. There was no way the shopkeeper would decline this offer. However, he did not grab at the gold coin in Jian Chen's hand and instead said, "Little brother, speak. Whatever the case is, if this uncle knows, I will definitely inform you."

"Shopkeeper, do you recognize a man named Tie Ta? He should be around my age." Jian Chen asked.

Hearing this, the shopkeeper let out a delighted light in his eyes. Hurriedly, he said, "I know him, I know him! Is he not a dark-skinned kid with long hair? His skin is really dark and is quite the straightforward little guy, right?"

"Yes, that's him. Shopkeeper, do you happen to know where he lives?" Jian Chen smiled and asked his next question.

The shopkeeper suddenly grew cautious and stared warily at Jian Chen and Ming Dong. Grimly, he asked, "Who are you two, and why are you looking for him?"

Knowing that the shopkeeper was afraid that he and Ming Dong were looking for Tie Ta for trouble, Jian Chen replied quickly, "Shopkeeper, we are students from Kargath Academy and old classmates of Tie Ta. We only wish to come pay him a visit."

Upon hearing that Jian Chen and Ming Dong were students of

Kargath Academy, the shopkeeper immediately felt at ease. With an admiring smile, he said, “Ah, Kargath Academy is truly the greatest institute in our Gesun Kingdom. Every single student that is accepted to that place is truly a talent among talents. I’ve heard that the newest Imperial Protector of our Gesun Kingdom was once a student of Kargath Academy as well.”

Jian Chen and Ming Dong smiled without saying a word at this.

Thinking for a moment, the shopkeeper answered, “Since you’re the classmates of that kid, I’ll tell you where he lives.” With that, the shopkeeper pointed a finger in the direction behind him. “Head twenty kilometers down the mountain to where a brook is. There’s a forest next to the brook. Enter the forest and there’ll be a village. In the village is a row of houses, and in those houses will be where that kid lives.”

“Couldn’t you just say that there’s a village twenty kilometers down the mountain? I feel ready to faint just hearing all those directions!” Ming Dong didn’t know whether to laugh or cry.

Jian Chen laughed before handing over the coin to the man. He left the city with Ming Dong. Leaping across the area at a rapid pace, they began to move to the back of the mountain. Twenty kilometers was truly too short of a distance for Jian Chen to feel like flying.

The bawling sounds of several beasts could be heard as they crossed the forest. Having not been even Class 1 Magical Beasts, neither Jian Chen nor Ming Dong paid attention to them as they traversed across the mountains at lightning quick speeds. Soon,

there was a five meter long river that the two of them crossed over. With another quick hike through the forest, they indeed discovered a small village on the other end.

The village was rather small in size with roughly thirty or so families in it. The houses were arranged in a singular line and were rather clean and tidy. All around the village were a series of fields where all sorts of vegetation and paddies could be seen. Several of the peasants could be seen working in them as well.

Jian Chen and Ming Dong both walked past the paddies until they arrived at the village entrance itself. Even after trudging past the fields, their shoes were still impeccably clean without a single spot of dust or dirt on it. The rich-looking robes the two of them wore caused them to look completely out of place in comparison to the peasant farmers who were all wearing coarse-looking clothing. So when the two arrived at this place, they caught the attention of all the villagers who began to grow nervous at their approach. Several of the villagers had already begun to clench their hoes and sickles tightly in preparation.

“What business might my two lords have here?” An aged, old man began to tremble as he approached the two and questioned them carefully.

Amiably, Jian Chen smiled to the elder and spoke with a kind tone. “Venerable elder, we are students from Kargath Academy along with Tie Ta, so we came today hoping to find him.”

“Oh, so you’re friends of Tie Ta.” The elder let loose a sigh in relief. Then with a wave of his hand and a hoarse shout, he spoke,

“There’s no need to worry everyone. These two are students of Kargath Academy and came looking for Tie Ta, their old classmate!”

The previously nervous-looking villagers immediately grew relaxed after hearing his words.

There was a rather suspicious look on Jian Chen after seeing this display. This was clearly a rather unordinary reaction from the villagers.

“Venerable elder, was there something that happened here recently?” Jian Chen asked.

“Nothing, nothing at all!” The elder waved his hands before replying, “Tie Ta went to hunt in the mountains earlier this morning. I reckon he’ll be back soon. Please, come sit in our village for a while!”

After a moment’s consideration, Jian Chen agreed, “Very well, then we’ll be troubling the villagers.”

Just at that moment, a deep and resounding voice could be heard from far away, “Father, mother, grandfather, first uncle, second uncle, and aunties, I’m back!”

Jian Chen and Ming Dong both turned their heads instinctively only to see a rather well built man with dark skin come walking from far away with a wild boar hung over his shoulders.

“Tie Ta has returned, he’s back! Oh, and he even brought back a giant mountain boar!” The elderly man cried out in excitement.

Ming Dong looked at the boar holding man with a rather disbelieving face, “Jian Chen, could this really be the Tie Ta you were looking for?”

Jian Chen smiled and nodded. “That’s right, that’s Tie Ta. When I was in Kargath Academy, he was the only friend I had. I see he’s changed a lot after several years. Even I can barely recognize him, but his voice is still the same as back then.”

At that moment, Tie Ta saw the two newcomers to the village. With a slight tremble of his body, he tossed the boar he was carrying to the ground and charged toward Jian Chen, “Who are you two? Strange, why is it that I feel as if you’re familiar to me, have we met somewhere before?” There was an icy tone to Tie Ta’s words. However, when he gave a closer look to Jian Chen, there was a suspicious glint in his eyes that soon turned to bewilderment.

Seeing Tie Ta, Jian Chen felt shocked as well. After many years without seeing each other, Tie Ta had already grown even bulkier than before. Small words aside, his body was practically a miniature mountain in size. Even at the height of 1.8 meters, Jian Chen could only reach Tie Ta’s chest who seemed as if he was already reaching a height of 2.5 meters.

Jian Chen tilted his head up at the mountain-sized Tie Ta with a

glittering smile on his face. “Tie Ta, after so many years, could it be that you’ve forgotten me?”

Hearing such a familiar-sounding voice, Tie Ta’s eyebrows creased together in thought. “This voice...” he muttered before growing silent. Then, his eyes began to brighten as if he remembered something. He looked joyously at Jian Chen with excitement. “You’re... you’re Changyang Xiangtian! Changyang Xiangtian, I... I remember what you sound like.”

Jian Chen smiled happily, “Tie Ta, I thought for a moment that you had already forgotten about me.”

“No, how could I? Changyang Xiangtian, I, Tie Ta, would never forget you even for the rest of my life. Hahaha, you are the best brother I’ve ever had. Do you remember back when we were hunting magical beasts in Kargath Academy? Those were the happiest days I ever experienced in my life! For the remainder of this life of mine, I won’t forget that either.” Tie Ta boomed with laughter before hugging Jian Chen in a tight embrace with vigor. Tears began to form in his eyes as he declared, “Changyang Xiangtian, I didn’t think that you’d still be alive. This is great! I heard all about what happened between you and the Hua Yun Sect from teacher. I know that you had to flee your home into the ruthless continent that is our Tian Yuan Continent by yourself! But I never received any news from you after that, and I thought that I’d never be able to see you again!”

## Chapter 535: Golden Blood (Two)

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Tie Ta was exuberantly excited and filled with glee. Ever since he had attended Kargath Academy, Jian Chen had become the best of brothers to him. Tie Ta had felt his memories of Jian Chen etch deep into the bones of his body after the beast hunting competition in the forest, so they would never be forgotten.

When the weaker-looking Jian Chen was wrapped in the arms of what appeared to be a black bear for a hug, he suddenly felt a large amount of power constrict him. Realizing that this was the raw strength of Tie Ta, Jian Chen couldn't help but feel surprised. Compared to several years ago, Tie Ta was far stronger than he was in the past. Even with his body tempered and reinforced by the Chaotic Force, he still found it rather hard to take in the hug.

Gently pushing away Tie Ta's arms, Jian Chen looked up at the bear-like man with some shock, "Tie Ta, a few years ago, you were the same height I was, but you actually grew so much since then."

Tie Ta had calmed down quickly afterward. Rubbing behind his head, he laughed, "Even I don't know what happened, but in any case, I grew a lot in two years." As he spoke, Tie Ta looked as if he was reminded of something and began to show worry in his eyes.

Jian Chen had caught onto the worry in Tie Ta's eyes, prompting him to immediately ask in concern, "Tie Ta, if there is some sort of difficulty you have, tell me and I will help you through it."

"It's nothing, nothing at all. Changyang Xiangtian, this is the

first time you've come to my home, come, sit, and talk for a moment." Tie Ta patted Jian Chen's shoulder with a hand, and began to lead him to a nearby wooden house. Before they could even take a few steps, Tie Ta suddenly realized that he had completely forgotten about Ming Dong. Laughing a little mischievously, he said with a low voice to Jian Chen, "Changyang Xiangtian, this must be your friend then!"

Jian Chen laughed and introduced him, "This is Ming Dong, my best friend."

Tie Ta's other hand went to shake Ming Dong's hand quite enthusiastically, "If you are a brother of Changyang Xiangtian, you are a brother of mine. Brother Ming Dong, let us walk."

"Tie Ta, there's guests in our village."

"Giant, are these two your friends?"

"Big bro giant, who are these two?"

By now, every single villager had surrounded the three with curious expressions. Everyone called out to him affectionately and with ease.

Smiling deeply, Tie Ta greeted everyone that greeted him one by one. After everyone left, they continued on their path to Tie Ta's place.



The interior of his home was not too big, and it was split into six different regions: the kitchen, the dining room, and four rooms to sleep in. Aside from his own room, his parents shared one, his grandparents shared another, and the last one was occupied by his great-grandfather, who was already a hundred fifty years old, but could not cultivate Saint Force.

Sitting Jian Chen and Ming Dong down next to the table, Tie Ta took out an ordinary bottle of rice wine and some iced meat to serve to the two.

“Changyang Xiangtian, Ming Dong, my home is not as rich as the ones in the city, so I can only bring out this to serve.” Seeing how wretched the food and wine he had served were, Tie Ta could only force a hollow smile in embarrassment.

Jian Chen and Ming Dong were not fussy people in any shape or form. With a wave of their hands and a few polite words, the three began to eat large portions at a time. Despite the food being rather unremarkable in taste, this was the best that Tie Ta could offer. Just how could they not take even a single bite of it?

Placing a piece of barbequed meat into his mouth, Jian Chen stared at Tie Ta and spoke with a rather ambiguous voice. “Tie Ta, I heard that you left Kargath Academy two years ago and never came back. Did something happen back home?”

Tie Ta’s eyes immediately flashed with terror at Jian Chen’s words. His mouth slammed shut without even the tiniest of sounds to be heard.

Swallowing the final piece of meat in his mouth, Jian Chen concentrated his stare at Tie Ta and grimly inquired. “Tie Ta, tell me what situation you’ve found yourself in. Do you or do you not take me as your brother?”

Frantically, Tie Ta began to wave his hands, “No, that’s not it, Changyang Xiangtian. You misunderstand, you are the best brother I’ve ever had.”

“Then whatever it is that’s troubling you, say it. I may be able to help.” Jian Chen pressured. He was already certain of the fact that Tie Ta was in trouble. Tie Ta was one of Jian Chen’s good friends, so with him coming across trouble now, Jian Chen wouldn’t dare sit idly to the side.

“Tie Ta. Just say whatever it is on your mind to Jian Chen. Don’t worry about a thing. Jian Chen isn’t the same wandering type of person he was in Kargath Academy. Within the Gesun Kingdom, there isn’t anything Jian Chen can’t fix.” Ming Dong chimed in. The straightforwardness of Tie Ta was enough for Ming Dong to follow Jian Chen’s example and treat him as a very good friend. Those with a straightforward and honest nature would often times be willing to help others, and would very rarely be the one to stab a friend in the back.

Tie Ta looked as if he had not yet made a decision and seemed to be hesitant. After nervously squirming where he stood for a good while, he finally steeled himself and bit his lips, “Changyang Xiangtian, Ming Dong, it’s not convenient to say it here, let’s go up the mountains first.”

“Alright!”

Without hesitation, Jian Chen and Ming Dong stood up to follow Tie Ta up a hillside path. It was only after they had walked several kilometers into the depths of the mountains that they stopped.

“Tie Ta, just what in the world happened for you to come so far from your village?” Ming Dong asked out of curiosity.

Tie Ta was in an extremely worried state with his eyebrows pinched together in deep worry. Carefully looking left and then right with a prudent expression, he looked to see if anyone was around before letting out a sigh in relief. After a slight moment of hesitation, he asked Jian Chen a nervous question, “Changyang Xiangtian. What color do you think blood is in humans?”

“Do I even need to answer? Of course it’s red. Why would you ask that?” Jian Chen asked in confusion.

“Aside from red, is there any other colors?” Tie Ta pressed on.

“Yes, but only magical beasts would have such colors.” Jian Chen replied.

“Then would those blood colors be likely to appear within humanity?” Tie Ta was growing even more anxious by this point.

Ming Dong replied with himself as soon as Tie Ta asked. “What? Of course not, or at least, not that I’ve ever heard.” Then, Ming Dong realized something strange. Amazed, he looked back at Tie Ta and asked, “Tie Ta, why would you ask me such a bizarre question unless...”

Jian Chen was becoming aware of the situation and let out an incredulous expression as well.

Clutching at his head in pain, Tie Ta’s eyebrows furrowed even deeper together with concern. “Changyang Xiangtian, Ming Dong, I have said my secret. You can’t tell this to anyone else; not even my parents know about this secret.”

Jian Chen and Ming Dong both nodded their heads together in solidarity.

“You two have guessed it already. My blood is not at all red in color, it has the color of what one might expect to find in a magical beast. Combined with my physique, do you think that I might not be even human?” Tie Ta spoke in anguish.

Ming Dong and Jian Chen looked at each other for a moment with startled eyes between the two. Tie Ta’s words were like a clap of thunder to their minds and stunned them into an unsteady state for a decent amount of time.

Even a three year old would be able to answer with confidence what blood color a human had. It was without a doubt red without any chance of it being something else. Whatever other color

appeared in a magical beast was never to be seen in a human before.

“Impossible, how could the blood of a human be any other color but red? Tie Ta, are you sure you saw it right? Perhaps you didn’t see it clearly enough.” After the shock wore off, Ming Dong cried out in utter disbelief.

“I couldn’t have. I am a coarse person, but even I have sharp enough eyes to see my own blood. If you don’t believe me, then cut my arm and see for yourself.” Tie Ta replied in anguish. The color of his blood had clearly been tormenting him something fierce and made him believe he was some sort of monster.

Ming Dong didn’t hesitate to grab a nearby leaf that was falling to the ground. With a sudden movement of his hand, the leaf immediately sliced over Tie Ta’s dark-skinned arms, but the skin remained unbroken.

Dumbfounded, Ming Dong’s mouth dropped open. “Well f\*ck me if that’s true. How is your skin so thick?” Although Ming Dong had used a single tree leaf, it contained a large amount of Saint Force that made it incomparably sharper than an iron sword. If such a sharp weapon wasn’t able to cut Tie Ta’s arm, that could only mean his body was far stronger than that.

Even Jian Chen was stunned by Tie Ta’s physique. While he knew since a long time ago that Tie Ta’s physical strength was extremely strong, he didn’t think that it would reach such an obscenely high level.

“Normally when I come across some prey like the wild animals, they wouldn’t be able to harm me no matter how much they bite.” Tie Ta looked rather pleased at that.

“Let me try again!” Ming Dong was determined to try again. With another leaf, he began to pour a lot of Saint Force into the leaf before trying to cut Tie Ta’s arm once more.

This time the cut had more strength put into it than before, but even then, only the superficial part of the skin was broken. Not a single droplet of blood could be seen coming from it.

“Your skin is far too thick. It’s practically the same level of a Class 5 Magical Beast. If I don’t have my Saint Weapon, then I doubt I’d be able to see you spill blood.” Ming Dong exclaimed in shock.

“Let me try then!’ Jian Chen took Tie Ta’s arm into his hand, and allowed a bit of the azure and violet Sword Qi to emanate from his fingertip. He then gently sliced his skin.

In front of the Sword Qi of the azure and violet Sword Spirits, Tie Ta’s tremendously strong body was like a piece of tofu. Without any wasted effort, his skin revealed a cut, and golden blood immediately began to spill from it.

Seeing the golden blood gushing out, Jian Chen and Ming Dong were both dumbfounded. The both of them could only look at the blood with expressions of utter shock. Tie Ta’s blood was indeed

not red but golden.

## Chapter 536: Golden Blood (Three)

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Seeing the blood slowly flow from his arm, Tie Ta sighed, “Changyang Xiangtian, take a look. Is my blood not red?”

“How... how did this happen?” Jian Chen whispered with a stunned voice. Tie Ta’s blood being a golden color was far too strange to even imagine.

“Jian Chen, look! His blood is even glowing!” Ming Dong suddenly pointed at Tie Ta’s arm with a finger and wide open eyes.

Looking back at Tie Ta’s arm, Jian Chen could see that the golden blood dripping down Tie Ta’s arm was indeed shining. If not for the fact that they were in a relatively dim place, this glow would have been very difficult to discover.

Jian Chen could only feel even more shock at this point. Not only was Tie Ta’s blood golden, it also had a golden glow to it. Such a sight like this was completely unheard of and unprecedented.

“Tie Ta, how did your blood become like this?” Jian Chen asked in shock.

“I... I don’t know either.” Tie Ta looked helpless. He too was completely confused on how his blood had become golden in color.

“According to my knowledge, the blood of magical beasts is the only blood that can have variations in color. Humanity has never



had any other color but red for their blood. This is simply too unbelievable to see. Tie Ta's blood is golden." Ming Dong exclaimed.

"Jian Chen, look at my body and how dark-skinned I am. Would you say I'm a human, a magical beast, or even a monstrosity?" Tie Ta looked to Jian Chen with a face of dread and terror. He was extremely afraid of what he could possibly be.

"You should be fine!" Jian Chen's eyes narrowed together as he spoke. Whatever was happening to Tie Ta was simply too bizarre to understand.

After a while, Jian Chen asked, "Tie Ta, did you eat anything strange in the past?"

Thinking for a moment, Tie Ta shook his head, "No. I've only ate the standard fare, whether that is the meat of the wild animals or the food from the academy."

"Then you never ate any strange fruit or strange plant either?" Ming Dong asked.

"None, I've never ate anything like that." Tie Ta shook his head again.

"Then when did you realize that your blood was golden? Did you feel some sort of strange sensation or something different in your body at any time?" Jian Chen persisted.

Tie Ta paused to think. “One day in Kargath Academy, I was hunting for magical beasts by myself when I came across a strong one by accident. When it drew blood, I realized at that moment that my blood had become golden.”

With a questioning murmur to himself, Jian Chen spoke, “How queer. When we came across the azure wolves in the forest, I clearly remember your blood still being red. How could it have suddenly become golden!?” Jian Chen’s eyebrows furrowed together in deep thought before suddenly thinking of something. “Tie Ta, from the day I left Kargath Academy to the day you realized that your blood became golden, did you realize your body was undergoing any type of transformation?”

“None. Everything was normal. It’s only after I formed my Saint Weapon that I felt my strength increase every day. Even if I did not cultivate, it would increase without stopping. Furthermore, my body grew taller as well, just look at how tall I am now.” As he was speaking, Tie Ta seemed to have remembered something and piped up, “Ah! I remember that while I was condensing my Saint Force to form my Saint Weapon, I felt my entire body grow extremely hot. Practically every part of it felt as if there was a ball of fire within my body. Do you think that’s the reason?”

Jian Chen grew silent as he couldn’t help but think about when he had condensed his own Saint Weapon. At that time, the azure and violet light had appeared all of a sudden within his dantian. Tie Ta had felt an unbelievable wave of heat through his body. This was extremely unusual since an ordinary person materializing their Saint Weapon would only feel their strength increase and not any other symptom.

“It would appear that the problem is most likely because of that.” Jian Chen muttered.

“Where was the problem?” Tie Ta’s eyes lit up as he studied Jian Chen with an anxious, nervous face.

Hesitating, Jian Chen replied, “It should be from the moment you made your Saint Weapon. Some sort of mutation happened in your body at that time. However, that’s just my guess since I’m not clear on just what could possibly turn your blood golden.”

Left with no clear answer still, Tie Ta scratched at his head in vexation. Distressed, he asked, “Just what in the world is happening? If this continues, do you think I’ll become some sort of monster?”

“Tie Ta, you needn’t worry. Your blood is indeed unique; according to what I know, the blood of some magical beasts is quite special. Some don’t even have golden blood. With blood like yours, this may be a blessing in disguise instead of misfortune.” Ming Dong comforted him.

“But, but...” Tie Ta clearly did not seem to accept that reply.

“There’s no buts about it. Ming Dong is right. This is a blessing and not a misfortune that cannot be avoided. Tie Ta, you don’t have to be so vexed. It will do nothing to solve your problem. Instead, you should accept the fact and stop spending your time worrying about it.” Jian Chen sternly spoke. Having said that, he

couldn't help but think back to the bitter experiences he once had. At that time he didn't know about the secrets of the azure and violet Sword Spirits, nor why they had taken up residence within his dantian. Despite being so vexed about them, they had not been a source of calamity for him. Instead, he had profited from them with plenty of good results.

“Fine then. I won't worry so much about it anymore. Who cares if I'm a human or monster? Even if I become one, then I'll just live my days in a place without humans.” With the comforting of Jian Chen and Ming Dong, Tie Ta finally decided to accept his predicament.

“That's the spirit, just learn to accept it. You fear your golden blood, but it might be a symbol of your innate uniqueness. Don't forget that you have a natural blessing.” Jian Chen laughed as he took out a towel from his Space Ring to wipe away the blood on Tie Ta's arm. When the towel wiped away the blood, Tie Ta's arm was without any traces of the injury as if it had never happened.

“Eh? Your injury has already healed, what a powerful recovery rate!” Jian Chen cried out in shock.

Tie Ta laughed, “My body heals quickly even after being injured.”

“Could this be the magic of your golden blood?” Ming Dong was astonished as well.

Jian Chen waved his hand in resignation, “Forget it, there's no

point in talking about it anymore. No matter how much we try to find an answer, we'll only be making blind guesses as things stand. Tie Ta, it's been years since we last met, let me see just how much you've improved since then."

Tie Ta had finally cracked open a smile at his words. "I haven't slacked off at all these past few years. Everyday I've cultivated so that even now, I'm a middle Great Saint Master. Changyang Xiangtian, how's your strength now? You may have beaten me when we were in Kargath Academy, but who knows whether or not you'll beat me today?"

It was between laughter and tears that Ming Dong looked at Tie Ta, "Tie Ta, you look down too much on Jian Chen! Even Heaven Saint Masters find themselves dying at Jian Chen's hand. As a Great Saint Master, Jian Chen could move a single finger to defeat you."

Turning pale with fright, Tie Ta cried out, "What? Even Heaven Saint Masters died because of him? Is that really true? Forget it then! We're not fighting. There's no way I'll fight with you!" Frantically, Tie Ta shook his hands and stared at Jian Chen as if he was the true monster.

Laughing, Jian Chen was about to say something when Ming Dong suddenly piped up first, "Tie Ta, I've heard from Jian Chen that you're unnaturally strong. Why not fight with me then?"

The naturally straightforward Tie Ta was not modest this time as he inquired, "My strength is quite strong, yes. Can you take it? What if I hurt you somehow?"

Unable to laugh or cry, Ming Dong replied, “If you can injure me, I’ll ram my head into the tree and kill myself!”

“No no no, that won’t do! You’re the brother of Changyang Xiangtian and the brother of mine by extension. How could I possibly allow you to do such a thing? Let us not fight and wait for another opportunity then.” Tie Ta didn’t realize the meaning behind Ming Dong’s words, so they had scared him greatly.

Ming Dong’s leg staggered so violently that he nearly fell to the ground. Smiling hollowly, he said to Jian Chen, “Jian Chen! Your brother here is... he’s... he’s too naive!”

Jian Chen couldn’t help but smile. Tie Ta was truly a simplistic thinker and wouldn’t think too much on such problems like these.

“Tie Ta, you shouldn’t underestimate Ming Dong. He already stands at the pinnacle of the realm of Earth Saint Masters. There is only a string’s width of a step before he becomes a Heaven Saint Master, but even a Heaven Saint Master wouldn’t be able to easily harm him. You needn’t worry about this.” Jian Chen spoke to Tie Ta.

“Aaah? That can’t be, even Ming Dong is that strong? How can you two be so amazing? I already thought that I was strong enough, but even now, you two are even stronger than I am.” Tie Ta’s self confidence had taken a tremendous setback after that.

Ming Dong pulled back at his sleeves with a smile, “Tie Ta, you

can rest assured now. Come, fight me without holding back. If I as a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master am injured by a Great Saint Master, then I, Ming Dong, won't be able to continue my life in this Tian Yuan Continent anymore."

"Fine then. Since you're already an Earth Saint Master, I shouldn't be able to harm you. Prepare yourself then, I'll start now!" Tie Ta stood up. He was serious now. With a crackling sound from both of his giant fists, he immediately struck at Ming Dong's chest with the slight booming sound of thunder following close behind.

Ming Dong stood there without a proper stance, but his palms were filled with the wind element energy. Becoming a blur, his hands flew up to his chest to block Tie Ta's fist.

"Bang!" When the palm and fist collided, there was a deep muffled sound as if the sound of thunder could be heard echoing through the air, forcing the hearts of anyone that heard it to skip a beat.

Jian Chen was slightly startled. Staring in bewilderment at Tie Ta, he could sense that Tie Ta's fist had a strength that was far beyond what was to be expected. When Tie Ta's fist impacted against Ming Dong's palm, there had been a thunderous sound that penetrated the bones and organs with enough force to rupture them.

After the vibrational force from the palm and fist subsided, Tie Ta staggered back a few steps. Ming Dong's body shook violently for a moment, but instead of staggering back, his feet dug deeper

and deeper into the ground.

There was a startled expression on Ming Dong's face as well as he exclaimed, "What force! No wonder Jian Chen said you are naturally blessed!"

Seeing that Ming Dong was still standing there, Tie Ta had a look of worship on his face, "Brother Ming Dong, you're truly amazing! My fist wasn't able to even knock you back. Then I'll go with my full power then, be careful now!"



## Chapter 537: Xiao Family

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A smile remained on Ming Dong's face, "Come then. I, Ming Dong, will accept your strike, so go all out without reserve!"

"Yahoo!" Tie Ta roared as he began to build up power in one of his fists to strike at Ming Dong. The first fist had already given him a decent understanding of just how large of a gap there was between he and Ming Dong. So this next fist would contain his entire strength without holding back.

As soon as Tie Ta's fist lashed out, the sound of muffled thunder appeared again. Just from the sight alone, one could tell that this punch was far stronger than the previous one with thunder breaking out continuously.

The amazement in Jian Chen's eyes had grown even more noticeable as he observed Tie Ta. This ordinary-looking punch from Tie Ta seemed as if it carried some sort of secret. A secret capable of making the sounds of thunder follow his fist while only being a Great Saint Master.

Ming Dong could sense the abnormality of Tie Ta's supposedly normal punch as well. His fists began to gather even more of the wind element into a thin layer of cyan light around his palms. With lightning fast speed he protected his body by blocking Tie Ta's dreadful punch.

"Crack!"

Another muffled sound similar to a clap of thunder could be heard with a force that seemed to penetrate even the human body. It allowed both Jian Chen and Ming Dong to feel their hearts forcibly skipping a beat.

This time, Ming Dong was unable to maintain his mountain-like position like before. His body began to shake violently as his feet slid back several steps, leaving an impression each time he staggered back.

The backlash Tie Ta had received was equally strong. His feet involuntarily staggered back several meters before finally stopping. However, when he saw that Ming Dong remained unharmed, he couldn't help but feel more admiration for him. With a low voice, he said, "Brother Ming Dong, you're really amazing! Even with my full strength, I accomplished nothing against you."

But Ming Dong couldn't feel the same happiness at all. Gently shaking his arm to get rid of the numbness, he looked strangely at Tie Ta before asking seriously, "Tie Ta, you didn't use a battle skill or anything when you punched me, correct?"

Jian Chen looked seriously at Tie Ta as well. Those two strikes had been unusual; not only did they release a strange sound after striking, but at the moment of impact between the two hands, there was a resultant explosion that had been enough to shock the internal organs of both participants.

"Battle skill? Not at all; I've never learned one before. Both of my fists just now were just from my own strength." Tie Ta smiled.

“Tie Ta, when you punch, do you feel anything out of the ordinary?” Jian Chen seriously questioned.

“No? Everything seems normal, Changyang Xiangtian, why do you ask?” Tie Ta was utterly confused on why Jian Chen had been so questioning.

Seeing the vacant look on Tie Ta’s face, Jian Chen gave up asking more. He knew that he wouldn’t be able to get any answers even if he did, but the fists Tie Ta revealed just now left a huge question in his mind. Jian Chen didn’t know just how a punch from Tie Ta could have such a strange sound that could also affect even his internal organs.

“Jian Chen, this is probably because of the golden blood in Tie Ta. That golden blood he has in him is really too strange, but it’s all the more proof that Tie Ta is not an ordinary person.” Ming Dong spoke.

Thinking to himself, Jian Chen found there was Ming Dong a point to his words and gave up questioning it any longer. “Let’s go back then.”

“Okay, we’ll head back then. But you two have to keep this secret of mine between us three.” Tie Ta pleaded with the two.

“Don’t worry, we won’t say a word.” Jian Chen promised.

Afterward, the three men began to walk back to the village. As soon as they arrived, they could see several dozen figures disputing with the weapon-wielding villagers.

Upon seeing the dozen distinctly dressed figures, Tie Ta's eyes seemed as if they would spit fire with anger. Howling, he cried, "Those bastards came again? It seems like the lesson I taught them last time wasn't enough!" With that, Tie Ta began to dash off toward the group.

"Tie Ta has returned, he's returned..."

"Bro giant has come back! Come quickly and beat these bastards up..."

"Kid, you've returned! Quickly throw these guys out..."

As soon as they saw Tie Ta return, every single villager looked as if a heavy weight had been lifted from their shoulders. They knew just how strong Tie Ta was, and as long as he was here, then those men would have no leg to stand on.

When the distinctly dressed figures saw Tie Ta approach, their faces were startled and frightened because of him. However, as if a sudden thought had occurred to them, a confident smile appeared on their faces.

Tie Ta quickly came to a stop in front of the villagers with a furious scowl aimed at the ten newcomers. "You annoying guys

came back again? Did you not get beat up enough by me?”

“Tie Ta, you’re too savage. We are men from the Xiao family. Our young master has already become a disciple of the Blackwind Sect, and the personal disciple of the sectmaster himself. With his illustrious standing, you are nothing more than a blade of grass to him. How could you compete with us? If you continue to be so unbridled like this, then you’ll be causing trouble for the entire village.” One of the youths spoke.

“As if I gave a sh\*t who you are. Blackwind Sect? I’m not afraid of them. Don’t think that you’ll be able to leave with her in hand. If you don’t leave now in fact, I’ll make sure to use my fists to drive you out.” With that, Tie Ta’s knuckles began to crack in anger because of the group in front of him.

“Tie Ta, you can’t even tell good from bad. The fact that our young master has taken favor to someone from your village should be a blessing, but you don’t even cherish that fact. Don’t you know just how many blue-blooded daughters would love to marry our young master within the Gesun Kingdom?” A blue-robed youngster spoke in a serious manner. If not for the fact that he had eaten his fair share of losses to Tie Ta, he wouldn’t have bothered to waste so much time trying to squabble with him.

At that moment, Jian Chen and Ming Dong caught up. Looking casually over to the group of well-dressed individuals, he asked, “Tie Ta, what’s going on?”

Furiously, Tie Ta explained, “The Xiao family saw that sister Qiu Yue was quite pretty, and want to kidnap her to wed her to the

young master of the Xiao family. They've tried multiple times already, but I've managed to beat them back each time. However, it's always been a short interval between each attempt, how annoying!"

The dozen men from the Xiao family could see that Jian Chen and Ming Dong were by no means ordinary figures due to their robes and presence. While they were aware that the two could be from an influential family, the men did not see the two as a serious threat at all. With the young master becoming a disciple of the sectmaster of the Blackwind Sect, their family position within the kingdom would rise with the tide, making them a family that few would offend.

"Who are you two? This is a matter between them and the Xiao family. Be sensitive and get lost. To offend our Xiao family is to offend the Blackwind Gate; a result that neither of you two would be able to afford." A thirty year old young man pointed a finger at the two with a domineering presence and an unbridled voice.

"Do you want to die!?"

Jian Chen's and Ming Dong's face darkened for a moment before Ming Dong cried out. An azure light streaked past as he instantly flew toward the one that spoke, and slapped him across the face with his palm.

"Pa!" A clear resounding slapping sound could be heard before the young man was sent flying by Ming Dong's slap. Ruthlessly tumbling to the ground three meters away, he staggered back up with a face that was dripping with blood.

Spitting out several bloody pieces of his teeth, the young man venomously glared at Ming Dong. As he opened his mouth to speak, the pain from the slap he received was far too much for him to withstand, forcing him to wince and close his mouth.

“What tool are you to think you can speak to us like that?” Ming Dong glared in disdain at the youth.

Ming Dong’s powerful slap subdued everyone there. Regardless whether they were the men from the Xiao family or the people from the village. None of them could speak due to shock.

The villagers all knew just how strong the Xiao family was in their hearts. With Ming Dong harming one of them by slapping them in the face, they were all worried about what the Xiao family would do in retaliation. The men from the Xiao family were astonished that Ming Dong would do such a thing however.

“We... we... we’re from the Xiao family. The young master of our Xiao family is the disciple of the Blackwind Sect’s sectmaster. Do you really wish to offend our Xiao family and taste the consequence!?” One of the youths cried out with fear and shock at Ming Dong.

“I’ve never heard of the Xiao family or whatever it is. If your entire group wishes to live, then hurry up and get lost. Never come back to this place, otherwise even if I forgive you, my brother will not do the same.” Ming Dong icily smiled.

The men from the Xiao family were furious, but they could not speak even a word. Ming Dong's action of hurting one of their comrades had sent fear into their hearts. They knew that this youth was far stronger than Tie Ta and far more vicious as well. He wasn't willing to hold back in his strength at all.

"We're leaving!" The men from the Xiao family didn't feel like staying here any longer and left the village with the injured member held high.

Seeing their retreating figures, one of the elders let out a concerned murmur, "We've definitely angered them this time. The Xiao family is extremely strong; if they decide to take revenge, then our village will be in trouble."

"Uncle, you needn't worry. If the Xiao family truly does dare come back, I will make sure to help you settle the problem." Jian Chen smiled with a look of disdain for the Xiao family in his eyes.

Although he had never heard of the Xiao family, he had indeed heard of the Blackwind Sect. They were one of the powers of the Gesun Kingdom, but they were far inferior to the Hua Yun Sect. To feel so empowered by having their young master accepted as a disciple was a clear indicator of their actual strength.

"My two lords, thank you for resolving my problem, Qiu Yue cannot thank you two enough." At that moment, a delicate voice could be heard from behind them.

Jian Chen and Ming Dong turned around by instinct only to see a



rather pretty young woman who looked to be around eighteen years old. Her pretty face contained a slight tenderness.

## Chapter 538: Leaving For The Xiao Family

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Observing the delicate and sincere face of Qiu Ye, Ming Dong let out a mischievous laugh, “So you’re Qiu Ye. How pretty! It’s no wonder that the men from the Xiao family are so willing to come here multiple times to wed you to their young master or something.”

Despite growing up in a small mountain village, Qiu Ye had a face that even most aristocratic daughters would envy. It could not really compete with a national beauty, but if she were to set foot in the open world, she certainly would be considered a rather rare type of beauty.

Qiu Ye’s face reddened in shyness as she listened to Ming Dong compliment her.

“Brother Ming Dong, don’t bully my sister Qiu Ye, alright? Otherwise, even if I can’t beat you, I still won’t forgive you.” Tie Ta grumbled at Ming Dong, he was very protective of Qiu Yue.

Ming Dong strangely glanced at Tie Ta with a mischievous smile, “Tie Ta, I only gave her two small compliments and you’re already so tense. Don’t tell me you like little Qiu Yue.”

Tie Ta’s face reddened in embarrassment. Stuttering, he spoke, “N-no. Qiu Yue is by far too pretty of a woman, how could a coarse person like me fit with her?”

Ming Dong continued to strangely stare at Tie Ta with an

exaggerated smile, “I was only joking with you at first, but I didn’t think that I’d actually hit the nail on the head. Brother Tie Ta, love is something that should be said out loud, don’t you know? With you stifling it within your own heart, just how could you win the affection of a woman’s heart?”

Ming Dong’s words caused Tie Ta’s ears to turn bright red. After shuffling around for what seemed like half the day, Tie Ta finally managed to speak, “Brother Ming Dong, don’t make fun of me here okay? I can’t say anything else.”

Ming Dong gave a hearty laugh at this. He glanced at Qiu Yue a couple times. He could see that the barely eighteen year old Qiu Yue had turned so shy because of Ming Dong and Tie Ta’s conversation that her head was threatening to bury itself into her chest.

At this display, Jian Chen and Ming Dong gave a knowing look to each other. With their eyesight, it was natural to see that there was a good opinion of each other between Tie Ta and Qiu Yue. However, what they couldn’t believe was that a woman that had grown up to be so pretty had fallen in love with the mountain that was Tie Ta.

“Haha, this giant here is our village’s most competent, most successful, and most amazing person. Everyday he is able to hunt and bring home a wild animal for the village. My Qiu Yue would go with Tie Ta, but she is also the treasure of my family. For the rest of this life of mine, I would never be able to have anything as precious as her.” A plain but sincere middle-aged woman laughed; she was Qiu Yue’s mother.

“Qiu Yue is the most beautiful lass in our village. Many of the other villagers have expressed their desire to marry her, but none of them have ever been as competent as Tie Ta. In my opinion, out of this entire village, only Tie Ta has the ability to gain this treasure.” An elderly man spoke with a gravelly voice. In these past few years, Tie Ta would go to the mountains every day and hunt for a wild beast before splitting it with everyone in the village. This had earned him the love and respect from everyone in the village to a very deep level.

Listening to the praises of the villagers, Tie Ta could only shake his head modestly and smile, “Uncle, aunty, I am nowhere as good as you say I am.”

A middle-aged woman with a wrinkly appearance could no longer handle the cheerful discussion about Tie Ta and Qiu Yue any longer. She began to impatiently speak, “Aiyah aiyah, stop it with these talks; the most important manner is how are we going to deal with the Xiao family now? This isn’t like before where they were slightly injured. They definitely won’t let us go this time. I bet that the next time they come, it won’t be with a small party of weak messengers.”

“That’s right! We shouldn’t be discussing this at all. We should be making plans to deal with the Xiao family. Although Tie Ta can fight, he won’t be able to fight against all of them. Not only that, but I’m sure that the next group from their family will be filled with highly skilled martial artists.” A man with a metal hoe slung over his shoulders grimly spoke with concern shown all over his face.

In this village, Tie Ta was the strongest. While there were some others that cultivated, they were no stronger than a Great Saint at most. The rest of the villagers were ordinary commoners so weak that they would be toppled by the Xiao family if the two sides fought.

Seeing the worry on everyone's faces, Tie Ta couldn't help but try to comfort them all, "Uncle, Aunty, you all don't need to worry. I will protect the village for sure. No matter how many people come, I will knock them all back."

Jian Chen laughed as he said, "Tie Ta, this problem isn't as bad as you think it is. Villagers, you may all rest assured. Since this problem was caused by me, it would only be natural that I help you resolve it."

Jian Chen's words had caused many of the villagers' faces to light up, prompting one of the middle-aged men to ask in a hurry, "Milord, is what you say true? Will you truly be able to resolve this problem?" From Jian Chen and Ming Dong's robes, the villagers could see that they were no ordinary people. They just had to have some sort of power behind them. When they heard that Jian Chen would personally settle this giant issue with the Xiao family, the villagers felt as if they had managed to grab ahold of that final strand of straw that anchored them to life.

Although the Xiao family was of no major importance in the Gesun Kingdom, in such a small village like this, they were an unbelievable might that could not be defended against.

Jian Chen smiled and nodded in a friendly manner. Despite the people in front of him being the lowest of the low in terms of social hierarchy, Jian Chen treated each and every single one of them as equals without arrogance.

“Everyone may rest assured. I will take care of this issue with the Xiao family and guarantee that they will never cause a commotion for the village again.” Jian Chen confidently spoke.

Jian Chen’s words elicited an explosion of joyous shouts. Everyone’s faces revealed smiles of great joy. Although the Xiao family had only sought Qiu Yue and not the entirety of the village, the villagers felt extremely close with one another due to the limited numbers they had. As a solidified front, whenever one family had troubles, the entire village also had troubles. When Qiu Yue had come across this problem, everyone else felt quite anxious about it.

“There’s no time to lose then. We’ll head straight for the Xiao family and resolve this straight away. The sooner we do so, the sooner everyone may rest in peace. Ming Dong, Te Ta, let us depart!” Jian Chen spoke.

With a joyful expression, Tie Ta responded, “Alright! In any case, you two are much stronger than I am. With you two around, I doubt that the Xiao family would dare try to be excessive with us.”

“Excessive?” Ming Dong couldn’t help but smile in contempt, “Who do you think my brother is? To have him personally come to the Xiao family is already giving them face. Just what right does the Xiao family have to dare be excessive to him. They wouldn’t

even have time to try and beg for our favor!”

After the plans were made, Jian Chen and the other two left the village and rushed to the Xiao family.

The Xiao family was a clan that had been established only a few dozen years ago. Situated within the First Class City known as “Huangge City”, they were one of the three biggest powers there and were consequently a short distance away from the village.

As soon as the three exited the mountains, Jian Chen carried Ming Dong and Tie Ta into the air toward Huangge City.

“Woah, Jian Chen, you’re really amazing if you can fly! Can all Heaven Saint Masters fly through the sky like this?” The muffled voice of Tie Ta could be heard. In his voice, the delight from flying for the very first time could be heard.

Zooming through the sky at a tremendous speed, they quickly traveled hundreds of kilometers away from the village in the direction of the city. Using the wind element to cover Ming Dong and Tie Ta’s body, Jian Chen guided them all straight to Huangge City. Then locating the Xiao family’s location on a map, they touched down where the clan should be living.

Jian Chen and the other two descended into the empty space of the Xiao family’s courtyards with the guards of the family instantly noticing their arrival. Even the observers from the outside of the compound had seen them descend from the sky, causing a tremendous clamor to appear. News that a Heaven Saint

Masters had graced their city with their presence had subsequently spread like wildfire.

Several middle-aged men came running out of the compound as soon as they saw Jian Chen, Ming Dong, and Tie Ta descend to their courtyard. Staring at the three in astonishment, they immediately bent their backs in respect. One of the men among their group respectfully yelled out, “This one is the captain of the guards for the Xiao family. We welcome your presence into our home.”

Jian Chen’s eyes calmly swept over the soldiers with an expressionless face, “Call out the head of the Xiao family to greet us!”

“Yes, this one will notify him straight away. If my lords would please relocate themselves to the halls to rest while I notify the master.” The guard nodded his head in an attempt to curry favor. This was the very first time he had ever gotten close to such an individual like a Heaven Saint Master. He was so terrified of saying the wrong thing that he was afraid to confirm their identities.

“There’s no need. The person I am looking for should be here.” Jian Chen calmly responded while looking straight ahead.

A group of people could be seen hurrying over. There were about twenty to the group, both young and old. At the very front was a forty year old middle-aged man.

When the group saw Jian Chen and the other two, they looked at



them with suspicion. Everyone had been called to hurry on over when they heard that several Heaven Saint Masters had touched down in the Xiao family's compound. However, they couldn't help but question when they saw their faces; Jian Chen and the other two were far too young. It was not at all the appearance a Heaven Saint Master would have.

Despite the suspicion in their minds, they didn't dare judge them just by looks. A Heaven Saint Master was still an individual their family could hardly afford to offend. Bowing down to the three men, the middle-aged man that stood at the group respectfully said, "Honored Heaven Saint Masters, this one is the head of the Xiao family, Xiao Yun. I welcome milords to my Xiao family, and give thanks to the honor you have given us by visiting."

## Chapter 539: Tie Ta Enters The Party

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“There is no need for lord Xiao to be so courteous. This one is Changyang Xiangtian. I came here today to discuss business with the house of Xiao.” Jian Chen spoke in a moderate manner.

However, when the name “Changyang Xiangtian” was heard, everyone from the Xiao family was stunned. Staring in disbelief at the young but handsome face of Jian Chen, their eyes simply couldn’t believe it.

“If this one may ask, are you possibly the very same Changyang Xiangtian as the fourth master of the Changyang clan?” The head of the Xiao family’s voice trembled as he inquired. The name Changyang Xiangtian was equivalent to a clap of thunder to his ears. It was a very famous name in the Gesun Kingdom. Not only was he a genius chosen by the heavens, he also became a Heaven Saint Master just after entering his twenties, and he became an Imperial Protector for the kingdom — a position that even the king himself would not be able to outshine.

“That is indeed this one!” Jian Chen declared.

The faces of even the highest-ranking members of the Xiao family immediately changed. Bowing deeply to the ground, they called out, “We pay our respects to the Imperial Protector!” At this, there were fluctuations to the voices of the men from their respect and admiration. For the Imperial Protector of the Gesun Kingdom to suddenly appear within their home, it was a great honor to the house of Xiao. But what made them worried was that the Imperial Protector had come out of the blue, meaning that it was unknown

whether he would bring fortune or misfortune.

“Respectful and honored Imperial Protector, please come and take a seat within our halls. Allow the Xiao family to play host to the best of our abilities.” The head of the Xiao family respectfully but nervously spoke

“That won’t be necessary. Lord Xiao, this one has come to deal with something that requires a discussion. After it is resolved, this one will be leaving.” Jian Chen replied.

“Whatever is the command of the honored Imperial Protector, our Xiao family will do our best to fulfill your endeavors! To accomplish such a task would be a great honor to my family. Even ten thousand deaths would not be enough to stop the entirety of the house of Xiao!” The head fawned without even bothering to hide his attempt to curry favor.

Previously, if one were to inquire which party was the strongest within the Gesun Kingdom, it would without a doubt be the Hua Yun Sect besides the royal family. However, after the failed invasion of the Gesun Kingdom by the four kingdoms, the situation had drastically changed. At the current moment, the Changyang clan held the title of the strongest whereas the Hua Yun Sect and the royal family couldn’t even compare.

Even if the half a million strong elite soldiers from the Qinhuang Kingdom were to be excluded from the garrisoned troops at Lore City, the Changyang clan had far more Heaven Saint Masters tucked away within it than the entirety of the Gesun Kingdom at its golden age. The fact that a dozen or so Heaven Saint Masters

defeated the ones from the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom was no secret either.

It would be no exaggeration to say that the Changyang clan had already eclipsed the royal family as the strongest faction. Even the Hua Yun Sect could not compare with its three Heaven Saint Masters.

From the Changyang clan, the fourth master, Changyang Xiangtian, played a crucial and very influential role. When the head of the Xiao family heard the name that belonged to the young Imperial Protector of the kingdom, he suddenly felt a little terrified. At the same time, he felt that this would be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to seize the tree that was Changyang Xiangtian and climb to the sky. Through this, the Xiao family would have nothing to worry about and could survey the entire Gesun Kingdom without fear. With a hasty amiable face, the head began to try his best to show the desire he felt for his family to help the Changyang clan.

However, Jian Chen was not moved by the man's friendly demeanor. With a calm voice, he said, "Lord Xiao, a few men of yours have been making trouble for a woman in my brother's village as of late. I hope that you will discipline the parties involved. I would hate to have to come back here in the future, and in the case that I do, do not say that I am heartless." Jian Chen's voice grew progressively colder as he spoke.

The head of the Xiao family along with the other high-ranking members all grew startled. Already their faces grew ruinous as sweat began to pool on their foreheads.

It was with incomparable terror that the head of the Xiao family knelt on his knees. He said with a quaking voice, "I beg the honored Imperial Protector to quell his anger! A misunderstanding has occurred because of my inability to discipline my family. I, Xiao Yun, will strictly punish those few men and return a satisfactory compensation to the Imperial Protector. This slight from my family will not be repeated."

"I hope you will do as you say. I will not look into the matters of the past, but there better not be a next time." Jian Chen icily replied.

"There won't be a next time, I can guarantee it!" Hua Yun hurried to respond with terror. He was already keenly clear that if the fourth master of the Changyang clan were to act against his Xiao family, then even the Blackwind Sect they had tried so hard to become friends with would be helpless to do a thing for them. Even the Hua Yun Sect, which was many times stronger than the Blackwind Sect, would be unable to go against the Changyang clan; such an act was unthinkable for any weaker sect like the Blackwind.

"Go and apologize to the villagers in person." Jian Chen spoke.

"Ye-yes. I will do as instructed straight away." The man nervously bobbed his head up and down without daring to speak back.

Seeing that an agreement had been made, Jian Chen nodded his

head in satisfaction. Looking back to Tie Ta, he asked, “Tie Ta, are you happy with how this problem has been solved?”

“Hahaha, very satisfied! Changyang Xiangtian, you really do have a great face; I didn’t think that you would be able to solve this problem so easily!” Tie Ta happily laughed. The fact that the problem with the Xiao family had been resolved with barely any energy made him feel very cheerful.

“Now that we’ve concluded this business here, let’s return!” With that, Jian Chen began to will the wind element to carry Ming Dong and Tie Ta up into the air. Within several seconds, the three of them disappeared into the horizon.

The entire Xiao family watched Jian Chen and the other two fly away. They all let out sighs of relief when they could no longer see the three. Standing there with some lingering fear, everyone’s faces were drenched with sweat.

Letting out a sigh to release the tension he felt, Xiao Yun’s facial expression hardened as he looked at the other power-wielding members of the family. He ordered, “I want you all to search for the ones who dared offend the fourth master of the Changyang clan at once! Search them out, and do not let them off!”

“Yes, my lord!” Everyone obeyed with equally serious expressions. They were all crystal clear that this case had given the entire family a giant heap of trouble, in fact, possibly a colossal amount of trouble.

Jian Chen, Ming Dong, and Tie Ta all flew back to the mountains at a fast speed before finally touching down in a vegetation filled area to walk the rest of the way to the village.

After entering the village, Tie Ta excitedly told the villagers the happy news that Jian Chen had resolved their issues. It was with great joy that the entire village began to look at Jian Chen and Ming Dong with feelings of appreciation. For a good while, only thousands of words of appreciation were spoken for the two.

After appeasing the villagers, Jian Chen was pulled in to talking with the other villagers by Tie Ta while his mother went off to the kitchens to cook up plenty of dishes to receive Jian Chen and Ming Dong.

“Hey, Changyang Xiangtian. I recall that back in Kargath Academy, our strengths were pretty much the same. How is it after these few years, you’ve become so strong? Don’t tell me that you have some sort of secret to make yourself stronger, teach me it then!” Tie Ta gave a pleading look to Jian Chen. On the continent, practically every cultivator desired a way to increase their own strength. Even the honest and straightforward Tie Ta was no exception.

With a hearty laugh, Jian Chen replied, “Of course there is a secret, but whether or not you can take the same road I do is unknown.”

“What secret is it? Tell me now. I, Tie Ta, will definitely become as strong as you. Even the head of the Xiao family was bent into submission by you. If I can become just as strong as you, then I

could let the village live a generation filled with peace.” Tie Ta spoke with excitement.

“This secret’s nothing complicated, even I could tell you.” Ming Dong spoke first. “Tie Ta, if you wish to increase your strength in a flash, the best method would be to explore the outside world and gain some experience. If you waste your time in a village with your talent, it would only stifle your future. Not only is the outside world brilliant, it will teach you many things and is far stronger than the village here.”

Tie Ta pensively scratched his head, “Really? I guess what you say has some sense to it. Back in Kargath Academy, Changyang Xiangtian wasn’t too far away from me in strength, but after that, he left Kargath Academy to wander the continent. After so many years, I didn’t think that his strength would be so strong as it is now. Could the experience gained from traveling the Tian Yuan Continent be truly that great on gaining experience in a short period of time?”

“Tie Ta, Ming Dong isn’t lying. It’s only when you go out and explore the outside world that your strength will improve quickly. You’ll learn plenty of things that you would never have been able to experience or see. It’s fortunate that I have a mercenary group that I’ll be developing in the next two days. As of right now, I need some manpower to help out, so if you’re willing, you might as well join my mercenary group. In the future we can all venture the continent and develop this mercenary group even more to become the strongest group in the continent.” Jian Chen spoke.

Tie Ta’s eyes began to sparkle with some excitement as he spoke,



“Then wouldn’t that mean we would be able to travel together?”

“Of course!” Jian Chen laughed.

“Great then. I, Tie Ta, will follow in whatever you guys will do. Wherever you go, I will go.” Tie Ta responded with an excited face.

After successfully inviting Tie Ta to join the Flame Mercenaries, Jian Chen revealed a happy smile, “Tie Ta, then why don’t you say your goodbyes to the village. Tomorrow, we’ll go back to my home for a trip and then we’ll introduce you to my friends.”

On the second morning, Jian Chen and the two gathered all the villagers to give their goodbyes before leaving the village.

Outside the village entrance, the entire populace of the village convened to give one last farewell to Tie Ta.

“Brother giant, you have to return as soon as possible!” Qiu Yue’s eyes glistened with reluctance as she looked up the giant body that was Tie Ta.

Looking back at Qiu Yue, Tie Ta displayed a rather complicated look on his face. Waving his hands, he said, “Sister Qiu Yue, I’ll come back as soon as possible. Wait until then, and I’ll be able to protect the entire village. If you don’t dislike this coarse person that I am, then wait until I come back with some money. I’ll... I’ll... I’ll come back and marry you.” Tie Ta mustered up the rest of his courage to speak the last phrase, but after he finished speaking,

his dark face turned red.

Qiu Yue's entire body began to tremble as if she had been moved by his words. Wiping a tear from her eyes, she said, "Brother giant, Qiu Yue will await your return..."

# Chapter 540: Leaving For The Blue Wind Kingdom

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After leaving the village, Jian Chen, Ming Dong, and Tie Ta flew straight to Lore City.

After about two hours of leisurely travel, they finally arrived back in Lore City where they then walked straight to the Changyang clan.

“We our pay our respects to the fourth master!” Soldiers saluted Jian Chen in the streets with respectful expressions when Jian Chen passed by.

Waving his hand, Jian Chen commanded, “Continue your patrol!”

“Yes!” The guards responded in unison before going back to their patrol.

“Changyang Xiangtian, is this your home? It’s huge!” Tie Ta gasped in amazement as he scoured the place.

Laughing, Jian Chen replied, “Come on, let’s go to where I live. I’ll introduce you to some friends.” Jian Chen then guided Tie Ta in the direction of a palace-styled building. He came across some servants and said, “Go and notify Dugu Feng, Senior An, and Yun Zheng to tell them to meet me here.”

Afterward, Jian Chen took Tie Ta into his own palace. As soon as they entered it, Tie Ta, who was ignorant of the outside world, was stunned by the layout and arrangement of the house. Every so often, he would stop to look around the place with an envious expression.

“Changyang Xiangtian, this is your living space right? Your family has to be very rich I bet.” Tie Ta sighed in admiration.

Tie Ta looked like a farm boy coming into contact with city life for the very first time, prompting Ming Dong to say, “Tie Ta, you don’t need to be so envious. Wait until you become strong enough, you’ll get this sort of treatment all of the time then.”

Tie Ta’s eyes gained a determined light to them as he listened to Ming Dong, “Well! I’ll do my best to increase my strength!”

At this moment, Dugu Feng, Yun Zheng, and Senior An came walking in from the outside. As soon as they entered, Senior An’s loud and rough voice could be heard, “Jian Chen, you’re finally back! When will we be heading out? I’m a person that enjoys traveling the world! Staying around here everyday is killing me.”

Smiling, Jian Chen replied, “Have a seat everyone. I’ll introduce you all to my friend.”

After everyone took a seat, Jian Chen introduced Tie Ta to the group. After several words of conversation, they all began to grow relaxed.

Jian Chen thought for a moment before announcing, “Now that we’re all here, we’ll leave tomorrow morning. Go back and prepare yourselves. Whatever you need to buy, get it today. Make sure all of your preparations are finished today.”

“We leave tomorrow? Changyang Xiangtian, where are we going?” Tie Ta asked.

“The Blue Wind Empire!”

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After leaving his room, Jian Chen went off to find his parents Changyang Ba and Bi Yuntian so he could explain his departure.

Although both Changyang Ba and Bi Yuntian were reluctant to see their child depart from them again so soon, they knew that their child had already grown up to become a man who had plenty of things to do. There was no way Changyang Xiangtian would be able to reside in their home his entire life, so the two parents clamped down on their thoughts and spoke nothing more.

Looking for Xiao Tian and the others, Jian Chen told them that he would be leaving first to develop his mercenary group. Xiao Tian and the others understood that there was no need for them to stay within the Changyang clan anymore, so they gave their farewells. The next morning, they would leave the Gesun Kingdom to return to the Qinhuang Kingdom.

Jian Chen even paid a visit to Kendall's wife and child, whom he promised to look after on Kendall's behalf. The matters of Sans had weighed heavily on Jian Chen's mind, leaving him ashamed and guilty. Many a times he would try to find a way to heal or make up for the destroyed Saint Weapon of Sans, but as of yet, Jian Chen had found no methods.

The next morning, Jian Chen held the sleeping tiger cub and gathered with Ming Dong, Tie Ta, Dugu Feng, Yun Zheng, and Senior An in the courtyard of the clan. All of the high-ranking members came out to send Jian Chen off because of his high-ranking status in the clan. Right outside, several Class 3 Magical Beasts mounts had been prepared by the guards. The beasts stood by the gates.

"Xiangtian, your silly second sister Mingyue left the family a long time ago without a trace. Despite all our attempts and efforts to try to find her, not even a single hint can be found. When you're traveling in the outside, please help find my girl." The second aunt Yu Fengyan implored Jian Chen. For her daughter to disappear without a trace for so long, made her worry as a mother.

"Second aunt, rest assured, I will definitely try my best to find second sister." Jian Chen seriously replied. His second sister Changyang Mingyue had cared for him in the past. So now that she had disappeared, even Jian Chen worried for her.

Bi Yuntian pulled You Yue's hand toward Jian Chen, "Xiang'er, with your strength, you could travel across the outside world and very few people capable of attacking you. Why not bring You Yue with you? She grew up in the imperial palace her entire life. The

only other place she knows of is Kargath Academy. The outside world is still unknown to her, so it would be a good thing to relieve You Yue's boredom."

Jian Chen glanced at You Yue. She was wearing a short skirt today with a very casual amount of makeup. It gave her a rather heroic demeanor while she stood shyly by Bi Yuntian's side. Everyone could already see that she was prepared to travel long distances by the way she was dressed.

Thinking for a moment, Jian Chen felt that he wouldn't come across anything too dangerous while he was in the Blue Wind Kingdom. Combined with You Yue's preparations to travel, there was no way he could easily decline. At last, he finally agreed to the request with a smile, "Very well. If You Yue wishes to travel outside to relieve her boredom, then why not let her travel with us?"

The princess' face revealed a happy smile at those words. Ever since she was young, the princess would rarely be able to see what the outside of the palace looked like.

Bidding farewell to everyone from the clan, the party of seven finally mounted their magical beasts and began to set off away from Lore City.

After leaving Lore City, Jian Chen continued to the area where the Eastern Deity Swords were garrisoned on the outskirts of Lore City. Upon seeing the three generals, Jian Chen spoke a few words to them before leaving the camp on his mount.

Qin Wuming and the other two generals watched Jian Chen and his group ride away into the distance until they disappeared from view. Speaking up, Qin Wutian asked, “Father, now that the business in the Gesun Kingdom is over and the Imperial Protector himself has left, when should we leave?”

Qin Wuming just laughed, “Withdrawing our troops from here? That’ll be hard. Quite hard indeed. Even if we rush to the Qinhuang Kingdom, it’ll take well over a year with the speed of our army. Although the Space Gate from the Dazhou Kingdom is nearby, it would take a large amount of monster cores, in fact, it’d take an exorbitant price.”

“Does that mean our army will be garrisoned here then?” Qin Wujian asked.

Qin Wuming nodded his head, “Correct. Originally when his Majesty ordered half a million of our soldiers to go to the Gesun Kingdom, he hadn’t planned on their return. The Gesun Kingdom is far too weak, but with the connection between the Imperial Protector and the royal family of the kingdom, we cannot afford to offend either side. Thus, his Majesty had decided to assist the Gesun Kingdom while also helping out the Imperial Protector himself. With his talent, he will eventually become a Saint Ruler later in his life. So to rope in such an individual without enticement and investments would be foolhardy.”

“I see now. Father, then will the three of us remain here in this place as well?” Qin Wujian asked.



Qin Wuming smiled, “Remaining behind here isn’t too bad of a thing perse. A Saint Ruler is an extremely great entity. In their eyes, we Heaven Saint Masters are just ants that aren’t worth considering. As of right now, the Imperial Protector hasn’t yet become a Saint Ruler, so this is a good chance for us to foster a good relationship with him. When he breaks through to become one, then we’d be able to have him help us with any trouble we might come across. Even more so, if we have the support of the Imperial Protector, then even the army wouldn’t complain or be too impudent.”

“I understand now. This was all planned by his Majesty himself. Indeed, this is a good chance. If the Imperial Protector becomes a Saint Ruler and is willing to back us, then father will even have the chance to be promoted to be the general of the kingdom’s army.” Qin Wutian spoke in realization.

Qin Wuming nodded his head with a smile, “That is what it means to keep the fertile waters within your own fields. His Majesty is a very wise ruler that is capable of controlling everything within his hand. Even if he cannot, he will do his best to keep us in their good graces.”

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On an official road that zigged and zagged, seven magical beast mounts could be seen running at high speeds in a fluid motion. They left behind a trail of dust as they passed.

“Changyang Xiangtian, how long will it take for us to reach the Blue Wind Kingdom at the rate we’re going?” You Yue asked Jian

Chen from his side.

Thinking for a moment, Jian Chen responded, “At this current rate, it should take two or so days before we arrive. It’s not as if we’re rushing there.”

Then, with a small pause, Jian Chen looked to the princess, “You Yue, call me Jian Chen in the future rather than Changyang Xiangtian.”

“Okay. This must be the name you used after you left the Changyang clan?” The princess sweetly smiled.

“Correct!” Jian Chen nodded.

“So you changed your name. No wonder I never heard about you when teacher said the Changyang clan couldn’t find you. Jian Chen’s a fine name to hear though. Changyang Xiangtian, I’ll call you that from now on as well.”

The group of people continued to laugh and chat to each other as they traveled. When it came to thinking about the mercenary group he had once commanded, Jian Chen’s thoughts practically flew over to Wake City.

After so many years have passed, he was unclear just how the mercenary group developed.

## Chapter 541: Reentering Wake City

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After Jian Chen and his group left Lore City, the Xiao family had all gathered within the halls of their clan compound in Huangge City. The head of the Xiao family sat in the topmost position while several dozen youths kneeled down on the other side. If Jian Chen and Tie Ta were here, they would be able to confirm that these youths were the very same ones that tried to kidnap Qiu Yue from the village.

“A report for the lord. We’ve made a concise investigation, and these are the ones that offended the fourth master of the Changyang clan.” One of the bulkier looking men cupped his hands as he gave his report.

The head of the Xiao family, Xiao Yun, stared dangerously at the few men. His frosty eyes made the youths afraid to respond or even look up.

“Your forgiveness, my lord! Please forgive us! We didn’t know that they were men from the Changyang clan. We only knew that a female villager was rather pretty, and we wished to have her wed to the young master. We did all of this with the young master in mind!”

“My lord, please spare us! We won’t dare do such a thing again...”

“My lord, please give us one more chance, please forgive us this once...”

The youths all knew that they had invited disaster upon themselves. Thus they knelt down and wept for forgiveness.

Snorting, Xiao Yun replied, “Drag them out and break both their legs.”

“Yes!” The middle-aged men nearby replied. Then calling for several guards, they dragged out the youths to break their legs.

“Tie them up and prepare them as gifts. We shall head to that village to apologize.” Xiao Yun commanded. For the grand and mighty head of the Xiao family to personally come to apologize to a mountain village, showed just how importantly he viewed this matter.

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The Cross Mountains was the Tian Yuan Continent’s largest magical beast mountain range. It traversed across the entire continent, bisecting the continent in two. The mountain range took up a sizeable portion of land.

An endless amount of magical beasts existed within the Cross Mountains. A veritable paradise for magical beasts to congregate at, many of the Class 6 Magical Beasts on the continent lived there. Very few of them lived anywhere else. Furthermore, legend had it that within the depths of the mountains existed several Class 7 Magical Beasts. As a result, the Cross Mountains were designated a forbidden zone for humanity. Any human that tried to enter the Cross Mountains would never find their way back alive.

So, the very depths of the Cross Mountains have existed as a forbidden zone for thousands and thousands of years. Even Heaven Saint Masters were afraid of taking a single step into this land.

At this moment, within the depths of the Cross Mountains, stood a three meter tall middle-aged man. This man had a very stalwart in physique. The veins in his body glowed with a golden color. His copper-like muscles bulged as a sign of well-development, and the only clothes he wore was a single pair of shorts that stopped short of his knees.

Both of the man's hands drooped down as he stood with hesitation in this area. His eyes flickered with an uncertain light as if unsure of something. Right where he was standing was the common boundary between the abyss of the mountains and the outer world itself.

“The entire Cross Mountains have been searched already, but the Winged Tiger God cannot be found. Even Rum Guinness' presence has completely vanished. It appears that she has already brought the Winged Tiger God from Cross Mountains a long time ago and into the territory of man. If we wish to kill the Winged Tiger God, then we will have to step into that territory.” The man muttered to himself with knotted eyebrows.

“Rum Guinness has already violated the treaty we have with mankind. Should I reveal this information and let the human experts deal with them?” The man thought for a moment before quickly shaking his head, “No, that won't do. This involves the ancient mythological Winged Tiger God. A matter like this is far

too important to allow humanity to realize the problem. If they find out and find a way to tame the Winged Tiger God while it's still a cub, then it'll be a tremendous calamity for the entire magical beast race. It appears that we cannot allow the cub to remain in the human territory; we must kill it, but the moment I step into the human's territory..." At this the man's voice began to falter as his eyes began to reveal a deep shade of fear.

After a moment, another gleam that would cause anyone to shiver appeared in his eyes. As if he was finally determined, he growled, "The experts of humanity have all hidden themselves. As long as I am careful, they won't find me." With that, the man took a determined step forward across the boundary between the Cross Mountains and the outer world. His body began to glimmer and shake for a moment before shooting off at an inconceivable speed, finally blinking out of sight.

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Two days later in the stronghold of the Blue Wind Kingdom, a group of mercenaries could be seen slowly escorting a caravan of goods. Among the crowd were seven Class 3 Magical Beasts traveling at a leisurely pace. Sitting on top of these magical beasts were six males and a single female. Although they wore plain clothes, their presences were regal and unordinary by any sense of word. Even the people around them didn't dare get too close, and kept a healthy distance as if afraid of unknowingly offending someone of unusual power.

After two days worth of traveling, Jian Chen and his group had finally arrived at the Blue Wind Kingdom Kingdom. After entering

the interior of the kingdom's territory, Jian Chen didn't stop. They continued on toward Wake City.

The Class 3 Magical Beasts continued to move at a rapid pace through the lands. They left behind a trail of dust that looked like a single dust dragon from far away.

By the end of the day when the moon had started to rise, Jian Chen's group finally arrived at Wake City. The horizon was already growing a dusky light with the last half of the sun nearly out of sight. The light that radiated from the sunset was enough to illuminate half of the sky.

There weren't many travelers moving to and from the gates of Wake City, so only several dozen weary soldiers were guarding the gates.

Jian Chen's group of travelers slowly made their way to the gated entrance of the city. Seeing the battleworn city walls, Jian Chen felt a complex emotion arise on his face as if reminiscing about something.

Wake City was a tiny Third Class City. In this place, Jian Chen had struggled with no small efforts to survive. His struggles had left deep impressions on him. Each step he took here seemed to link to yet another memory fragment in his mind.

Ming Dong stared curiously at the old-fashioned walls of Wake City before speaking up, "Jian Chen, your mercenary group is staying in this city?"

Jian Chen nodded “Once. But it has been a long time, I’m not quite sure if they’re still in Wake City.”

With that, Jian Chen and the others entered the city. Stopping a passerby, Jian Chen questioned, “Hello there brother, are the Flame Mercenaries still in Wake City?”

“What a strange question. The Flame Mercenaries have always been in Wake City. Where else would they be if not here?” The man stared strangely at Jian Chen.

Jian Chen was overjoyed to hear that, “Wonderful. I didn’t think that the Flame Mercenaries would still be here. I was worried they would move to another location. Brother, do you happen to know where they’re located at?”

“At the Kai family’s compound in the southwest part of the city.” The man replied.

“Many thanks!” Jian Chen clasped his hand together before urging his mount forward, bringing the other six to where he remembered the Kai family’s location was.

At that moment, there were already a large group of sturdy-looking men gathered at the gates to the Kai family’s home. Each one of them possessed a murderous air to them, totalling to over two hundred people.



Right in front of them were three middle-aged men and a single elder standing side by side in a single line in front of the gates. Standing behind these four was yet another large group of people with frosty glares of their own.

“One-armed Warrior, your Defiance Mercenaries are intolerable with your bullying. Although our Flame Mercenaries may not be as strong as we once were, that doesn’t make us easy targets. Do you really think we’ll stand for the annihilation of our group? We’ll ensure that your Defiance Mercenaries lose just as much as you gain.” The elder standing in front glared dangerously at the group in front of him.

Standing at the very front was a man with a single arm. Laughing, he spoke, “Flame Mercenaries, if this were the past, then your group would have the strength to go against my group. With how things stand now, I, the one-armed warrior, really don’t see you as a threat. If you don’t want to die, then cooperate with us. Join with my Defiance Mercenaries and we won’t treat you unfairly.”

“Hmph. Hoping to annex the Flame Mercenaries into your Defiance Mercenaries is nothing more than the dreams of a madman. The brethren of the Flame Mercenaries are not cowards. We will not accept this.” A middle-aged man spoke from in front of the gates.

“Qingfeng, I know that you are not cowards. You are a man in the truest sense of word and thus I respect you. However, your Flame Mercenaries cannot compare to my Defiance Mercenaries in battle, so why not join with us and help expand the Defiance

Mercenaries? When we become the Blue Wind Kingdom's strongest mercenary group, I will award you all for your services. From here on out, endless glory and splendor will await us. What is there to disagree with, eh? It's not worth your life to squabble over this." The one-armed man laughed.

"Hmph, if not for the absence of the captain of our Flame Mercenaries, then your Defiance Mercenaries wouldn't even have the chance of going as you please in Wake City. You'd be thrown out before you'd start." Mo Tian gnashed his teeth.

"The captain of the Flame Mercenaries? Ah, you must be talking about Jian Chen. I've heard about him before; a single man who destroyed the Zhou Mercenaries and the Zhou clan by himself before also eliminating the Tianxiong clan in Wake City. Then, he even fought with a Class 5 Magical Beast with his skill. Tut tut, what a strength he has. Not bad, not bad at all; even I have no choice but to admire him." By this point, the one-armed man had a taunting look on his face as he continued to speak. "But what a shame; your captain isn't here. He went off to participate in the Gathering of the Mercenaries. Hmph, what a egotistical brat with no knowledge of the world. With just the small amount of fame he achieved in this small city, he thought he was undefeated in the world and joined the Gathering of the Mercenaries. He should have realized that area is a world that only Earth Saint Masters can survive in. Without that strength, just how could he participate in it. He most likely died in Mercenary City, so how could he even come back to Wake City!"

# Chapter 542: Crisis Of The Flame

## Mercenaries

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The one-armed man's words caused the four men standing in front of the Kai family's gates to harden their expressions. Qing Feng had been the first to fire back, "One-armed Warrior, bite your tongue. Just how could the immensity of our captain's strength be explained by you?"

"Haha, true enough. I feel that this Jian Chen's strength is nothing more than hearsay. Whatever his true strength is, I have never seen it before. What I am sure is that he is still not yet at the strength of an Earth Saint Master. If he wasn't one before he went to Gathering of the Mercenaries, then he's certainly looking to die an early death. It's been a long time since the ending of that event anyways. If your captain Jian Chen was still alive, then why hasn't he returned?" The man sneered.

Seeing that no one could reply, the one-armed man continued on, "I bet you've all already reached an answer. You're just not willing to accept it. Then why don't I say it for you? Your captain died in Mercenary City. He will never come back here alive."

The man's words caused every single mercenary from the Flame Mercenaries to blanch, but they quickly schooled their emotions.

At this, the man could only shake his head in disappointment. He had originally planned on striking at their morale to influence them all over to his side. In the end it had been fruitless.

How would he know that the hundred member strong Flame Mercenaries were all previously the mercenaries under the command of the Great Saint Masters Qingfeng, Mo Tian, Duo Kang, Charcas, Seth, Kai Er, and Weiss. In their hearts, these seven men were the leaders that they would die for; men that they would continue to follow with unflinching conviction.

“One-armed Warrior, don’t bother wasting time with this scheme of yours. We will follow our captain to the death. You may as well give up; our Flame Mercenaries will never join your Defiance Mercenaries. If you still wish to continue with this thought of yours, then we may as well waste no time and get to fighting.” Kai Er spoke. Although they weren’t as strong as they once were in the past and were just below the Defiance Mercenaries in strength, the final outcome between the two would be disastrous.

The one-armed man’s face darkened as he bit his lip, “I’ve given you a chance, but you were unfortunate enough to not cherish it. If this is it, do not blame me for being ruthless now. Brothers, let us fight!” At his command, every single man behind him began to take out their Saint Weapons one by one.

“Brothers, let us fight!” Kai Er and the others called out, unwilling to lag behind. As soon as they spoke, several dozen men from within the Flame Mercenaries took out a bottle from their Space Belts and smashed it onto the ground. Soon, the courtyard was filled with a light-green smog of smoke after the bottles had been broken. The smog obscured the sight of everyone.

The actions of these these man confused the surrounding Flame

Mercenaries. Flabbergasted, they all looked around without any understanding of what was happening.

Noticing the commotion going on behind him, Qingfeng turned around only to discover the light-green smog of smoke gradually dispersing into the open air around them. Stunned for just a brief moment, Qingfeng immediately snapped back to focus with a cry, “Poison! Everyone hold your breath!”

“Hahaha, it’s too late for that.” The one-armed man laughed in an unrestrained manner from outside the courtyard.

“You...!” Mo Tian furiously glared at the man with a frightening expression. His eyes gleamed with a furious and unrestrained killing intent as he ground his teeth, “One-armed Warrior, I took you to be a man. To think that you’d actually use such a two-bit method; I’ve misjudged you.”

“Hahahaha, what method isn’t useful? Let me tell you, as long as a method brings you victory, then it is a good method! If you want to survive on the continent, then you can’t afford to be inflexible! Otherwise, you won’t survive for long.” The one-armed man laughed.

“Take an antidote, now! Kill the traitors in our ranks!” Kai Er whirled around to command the Flame Mercenaries.

Needless to say, the members of the Flame Mercenaries had already taken out several antidotes from their Space Belts. Administering them, they turned to face the traitors that had tried

to poison them with infuriated glares and murderous auras.

After taking several steps forward, each one of the mercenaries had paused with a pained expression on their faces. Coughing, they all began to cough out blood from their mouths as the poison within them finally took effect.

Kai Er, Mo Tian, Qingfeng, and Charcas were startled by this sight, “What a strong poison!” One of them couldn’t help but cry out.

Pleased with himself, the one-armed man smiled, “Of course! This is a poison I synthesized after paying a heavy price. It isn’t any normal type of poison, it has two steps to it! The first step is to use a type of poisonous seed that’ll hide itself within your body without detection. It’ll slowly germinate and grow within your body bit by bit without any of you ever noticing. Then, after using a special method, the seed will begin to rapidly unfold and cause a tremendous amount of pain. This poisonous smoke was the trigger for the poison to activate within your body!”

“This smoke isn’t anything special in terms of toxicity. It’s only function is to activate the poison inside you since it doesn’t require to be breathed in. As long as the body is in contact with it, then the poison will be triggered. Its effects are so strong that in four hours, you’ll find yourself waking up by the Yellow Springs!” By now, the one-armed man was laughing out loud. “There’s one more thing I forgot to tell you, the antidote to this poison can’t be bought! So don’t waste your time taking those antidotes won’t help you here. At most, you’ll alleviate some of the symptoms, but you won’t be able to cure yourself of my poison.”

“One-armed Warrior, so you’ve been planning this for all this time! A month ago, you must have had those traitors of ours plant the poison in our food!” Kai Er roared with fury. The poison in his body had already started to activate as blood started to leak from his mouth.

“Correct! But that can’t be blamed on me. Who told you not to surrender the Flame Mercenaries to me? If you only just surrendered earlier, then this wouldn’t have happened to you.” The one-armed man laughed before taking out a palm-sized bottle. “You have four hours. Follow me and prosper, or defy me and die. You have a choice between life or death, and I have only a limited supply. Whoever comes first gets some. Otherwise, pity will be given for the ones that have none.”

The entire Flame Mercenaries grew quiet now as the poison within their bodies continued to get worse. By this point, everyone’s faces were deathly pale as blood streamed from their mouths.

“One-armed Warrior, don’t even think you can persuade us with your two-bit methods! I, Mo Tian, will never let you live easily for this life of mine!” Mo Tian barked as he took out his Saint Weapon. Just as he took a single step forward, a coughing sound came from his mouth and blood erupted from it.

“If I may offer you some advice; don’t try using your Saint Force. It’ll only serve to increase the growth of the poison even more and accelerate your death.” The man spoke with a smile. His eyes turned to the men behind Mo Tian, “Take use of the opportunity

that the poison hasn't yet reached your hearts. If you wish to live, then hurry up and swear allegiance to my Defiance Mercenaries. Otherwise, the poison will reach your heart by nighttime. By that point, this antidote of mine will be useless to help you. I only have a limited quantity of this antidote, so choose quickly and don't regret the choice you make!"

After a moment, there were finally several mercenaries that didn't wish to die. One by one, they slowly walked out of the compound.

Watching those men leave their ranks, Kai Er and the others could only sigh to themselves. They couldn't blame them.

Soon, more and more mercenaries decided to live and serve the Defiance Mercenaries rather than die. In the end, only sixty or so men were left from the original hundred plus men.

The one-armed man glanced at Kai Er and the other three with a chuckle, "Kai Er, Qingfeng, Mo Tian, Charcas, what do you think? There's not many antidotes left, but if you choose to enter my Defiance Mercenaries now, I won't mistreat you."

"The might of the One-armed Warrior is far too inadequate for us four to join you." Mo Tian snarled in disdain.

Slowly taking up his giant sword, Charcas turned back to look at his sixty or so pale-faced brothers. Heroically, he spoke, "My brothers! I am proud of you all, for you are men among men, men born from steel itself! Death is not something to fear! If death is all



that we face, then let us pick up our weapons and defend our honor. If we are to die, then we will die magnificently. If we are to die, then we will take with us a sacrifice. We will not let the Defiance Mercenaries walk away unharmed!”

Qingfeng raised up his long sword with a heroic aura, “Brothers! Let us fight side by side in this final battle!”

“For battle! For war! For glory!” The remaining members of the Flame Mercenaries roared out to the heavens one after another in response to Mo Tian and Qingfeng. Although they were all pale in the face and were bleeding blood from their mouths, their eyes remained unwavering and unafraid of death. They had already given up their fear of death.

At this sight, the one-armed man’s face darkened. Snorting, he spoke, “If you wish to die, then I’ll grant you all that favor! Kill them all!”

The group of men behind the one-armed man began to let loose a bestial and bloodthirsty amount of killing intent before charging toward the men in the compound.

Suddenly, a red glow of light exploded into view as a single flaming longsword came flying at tremendous speeds from the other end of the road. In an instant, it impacted the ground in front of the compound. With a tremendous explosion of energy, the men from Defiance Mercenaries were immediately reduced to a pitiful state.

# Chapter 543: Return Of The Captain

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Caught off guard by the abrupt explosion, both the Defiance Mercenaries and the Flame Mercenaries, who were on the verge of war with one another, stopped dead in their tracks. No matter the side, everyone looked to the gates of the Kai family with shock.

Everyone could see from the origin of impact that there was a single two meter deep crater. The marbled road had been reduced to rubble with spiderweb-like cracks extending across the ground.

Seeing the two meter deep crater, the Flame and Defiance Mercenaries were deeply awed and stunned. Just what type of strength would one need to be able to cause damage to this extent? It was hard to believe or ascertain for sure, but even a battle skill used by a Great Saint Master wouldn't be able to cause a comparable amount of destruction. This was after all marble of a very durable caliber. Not only was it hard and solid, it was unlike the soft and malleable dirt found outside in the wild.

The members of the Defiance Mercenaries and the men with Kai Er looked to the end of the street with hardened expressions. In their hearts they were all apprehensive. Everyone was well aware that the person capable of such destruction would most definitely be either a Great Saint Master with a battle skill or an individual at the Earth Saint Master realm. In either case, it was an individual that neither of the two groups could win against. Even more dangerous was the fact that no one knew whether this newcomer was friend or foe.

The colors of the sky were growing dimmer and dimmer as the

shroud of night blanketed the earth. As a result, the Flame Mercenaries and the Defiance Mercenaries could only nervously wait as they listened to clapping sounds from the end of the street. Shortly afterward, seven magical beast mounts came into view along with their riders who were slowly advancing toward the two mercenary groups. Neither the Defiance Mercenaries or the Flame Mercenaries were able to make out the faces of the riders with full clarity because of the distance and the dampened vision due to the darkness of night.

Watching the seven mounts and riders slowly approach them, the representative of the Defiance Mercenaries took a hesitant step forward. Saluting them, he spoke, “This one is the captain of the Defiance Mercenaries, known as the One-armed Warrior. I pay my respects to you seniors.”

The seven hadn’t spoken at all and moved forward in silence at a slow pace. Coming from one end of the street to the other, they finally arrived at the gates to the Kai family. It was at this moment that the four men and the one-armed man could distinctly see the faces of the men. To the shock of everyone, aside from the two middle-aged men at the very sides, the rest of the travelers were all youths.

“I bet this group is a group of aristocratic children from some sort of wealthy family. That strike just now has to be from one of the two middle-aged men at the sides. If such a strong individual was assigned as their guards, then the rapport behind this group has to be extremely strong.” The one-armed man conjectured to himself. Without neglecting his expressions, he continued to bow respectfully as he smiled enchantingly, “My lords must be traveling across this road. My sincere apologies, I shouldn’t have

blocked the roads at all; allow me to give way.” With that, the man immediately ordered his mercenaries to move out of the way.

“My lords, this one is known as the One-armed Warrior; captain of the Defiance Mercenaries! Although our strengths are well beneath your eyes, there is very little that my mercenaries cannot accomplish in Wake City. Should my lords ever require assistance in the future, do call on us. My lords, the road is clear now, if you please!” The man saluted along with the other mercenaries with a rather cordial expression on his face.

At this current moment, the One-armed Warrior was completely focused on the riders on top of the magical beast mounts, and had completely disregarded the men behind him. Kai Er and the other three were at this moment staring at the face of Jian Chen in complete shock — some of them could barely believe their eyes at what they saw.

Despite the fact that Jian Chen had left Wake City two years ago, Kai Er and the others would recognize Jian Chen from anywhere. After participating in the Gathering of the Mercenaries, it had taken Jian Chen two years to return in their moment of peril. Such timing painted Jian Chen as a savior in their eyes.

The flames of hope had reignited within their eyes once more at this sight. It was almost as if the glorious dawn of victory could be seen instead of the initial dusk of defeat.

Seeing the ingratiating appearance of the one-armed man, Jian Chen couldn't help but find himself smiling from where he sat. This smile was not a happy smile, but a cold one. Shortly after, his

eyes slowly made their way toward the gates of the Kai family where Kai Er and the others were. A furious killing intent gradually began to show in his eyes, so with a smile that did not quite make its way completely to his eyes, Jian Chen spoke, “The One-armed Warrior? I will remember that name.”

There was absolutely no way that the one-armed man would know that this youth in front of him was actually the captain of the Flame Mercenaries, Jian Chen. He had only thought that he had coincidentally come across the young master of some sort of influential and aristocratic family, and had completely missed the implied meaning hidden in Jian Chen’s words. As such, he had been overjoyed to hear Jian Chen and spoke up, “If I may inquire of milord’s name. This will be a great honor to the One-armed Warrior. Milord, the path is clear now, I shall not take up any more of your valuable time. If my lord pleases.”

A cold smile remained on Jian Chen’s face, “One-armed Warrior, who says that I was passing by on this road? My destination is here in fact.”

The man was startled into silence at these words.

The light in Jian Chen’s eyes immediately frosted over as a tremendous amount of killing intent began to leak from his body and enshrouded the other man in it. “One-armed Warrior, do you know who I am?” Jian Chen asked with a demanding growl.

The one-armed man’s face seemed to have aged by now. As a Great Saint Master, just how would he be able to withstand the killing intent of a Heaven Saint Master? Straight away, it felt as if

he had been dropped into a bottomless abyss of ice that brought shivers and sweat to his entire body.

The one-armed man was completely pale with fright now. For the life of him, he had absolutely no idea just how or why the aristocratic young lord in front of him was targeting him with such a tremendous amount of killing intent. It left him speechless beyond belief and indescribably terrified. Neither did he know just when or how he had somehow offended the very same strong young lord.

“Milord, could I have offended you somehow in someplace? Might I inquire the specifics?” There was a trill to his voice now. Although he had no idea how strong Jian Chen was, the amount of killing intent targeted at him was enough to leave his heart in terror.

From his perch on top of the magical beast mount, Jian Chen towered over the one-armed man with a sneer. “One-armed Warrior, listen well. I am the one you said died in Mercenary City. I am the captain of the Flame Mercenaries. Jian. Chen!”

The pupils of the one-armed man instantaneously dilated at Jian Chen’s speech. His face took on a drastic change as his eyes stared in disbelief at Jian Chen with absolute dread.

“What! Yo-you-you’re, you’re that Jian Chen!” The man was beside himself and his voice began to tremble.

When the four men at the gates heard Jian Chen’s words, they let

out a gasp of disbelief one after another, but the emotions in their eyes was of extreme joy.

“The captain! The captain has returned! Our captain has finally returned...”

“It’s the captain! The captain has returned from the Gathering of the Mercenaries...”

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Kai Er and the three continued to cry out in emotional relief one after another while the dozens of mercenaries behind them began to reveal wide open grins on their faces. As deep in the abyss of death as they were, their hands had managed to fumble and grab onto a vine that would pull them to safety. In that darkness of death, the light of life could be seen now.

Having noticed the deathly pale faces of everyone, Jian Chen didn’t waste any more time to banter. Glaring at the one-armed man, Jian Chen said, “One-armed Warrior, you are courageous to go against my Flame Mercenaries, I’ll give you that.”

The one-armed man’s face was a mixture of pale-white and putrid-green from his fear and shock. Seeing the handsome but young face of Jian Chen and associating him with the tremendous explosion of power, caused his heart to be terrified.

“You’re actually the very same Jian Chen as the captain of the

Flame Mercenaries? Didn't you go off to participate in the Gathering of the Mercenaries? How did you make it out alive?" The man quavered.

Coldly laughing, Jian Chen replied, "Enough talk, bring out the antidote straight away!"

A gleam of light flashed through the one-armed man's eyes. Immediately thinking of a plan, he took out a white jade bottle from his Space Belt and held it tightly within his hands as he backed away. In several moments, he stood twenty meters away from Jian Chen with a panicked face. "Jian Chen, I only have this much antidote. If you don't believe me, I'll just smash it all here and now for you to never get the antidote to my poison."

Jian Chen smiled in contempt as he glared at the man. "Did you think you could negotiate with me?"

The one-armed man stared fearfully at Jian Chen and then the two middle-aged men Yun Zheng and Senior An. Realizing the strength of the opposition, the fear he had in his heart for these men had instantly skyrocketed. However, for the sake of a safe return, he didn't have a choice. Since he poisoned the men of the Flame Mercenaries, he knew there was no way that Jian Chen would let them go now.

"Jian Chen, if you want the antidote, fine. However, you must promise us that we will be granted a safe departure from here." The man cried out. Without waiting for Jian Chen to reply, he waved for his men and shouted, "Brothers, run away!"



Every single member of the Defiance Mercenaries immediately knew that they were the weaker party. Without hesitation, they all collected their Saint Weapons and ran off in all directions with reckless abandon.

“Leaving won’t be as easy as you think.” Jian Chen’s face hardened. “Ming Dong, Dugu Feng, Yun Zheng, Senior An, stop them all! Kill anyone that tries to escape without mercy!”

“Haha, alright!” Ming Dong laughed out loud as he flew out from his saddle. Transforming into an azure light while in mid-air, he disappeared from sight. He reappeared a hundred meters away to cut off the other side of the road where the Defiance Mercenaries were trying to run away.

Dugu Feng, Yun Zheng, and Senior An had already realized the roles they would have to act out in this scene. They didn’t dare defy Jian Chen’s commands. Without hesitation, they flew into the air and followed Ming Dong’s route to stop the mercenaries from running off in any direction.

Startled, the one-armed man held the bottle high into the air and stared dangerously at Jian Chen. “Jian Chen, this synthesis of mine has only one antidote! Do you really want your entire Flame Mercenaries to die from deadly poison?!”

“You have no right to threaten me! Furthermore, you have no right to demand negotiations!” Jian Chen barked. With a single thought, he began to gather the boundless energy of the world to

swirl around them in a frantic manner. The tide of energy began to swirl around the one-armed man, rendering him incapable of movements. With a extension of his arm and palm, Jian Chen forced the bottle in the man's hand fly to his own.

Having witnessed the methods of a Heaven Saint Master struck no small amount of fear into the heart of a Great Saint Master like the One-armed Warrior.

On the other side, Ming Dong and the other three had completely blocked the exit of the Defiance Mercenaries. Within seconds, someone within the group had cried out.

“They’re only several men! We can take them on, charge!”

“That’s right! With just those four, we’re far more than them! If we all fight now, we can slaughter them!”

One after another, the mercenaries of the Defiance Mercenaries took out their Saint Weapons and charged straight at Ming Dong to strike him down.

“You’re acting recklessly here!” Ming Dong laughed. Before he could make a move, Dugu Feng made a motion to stop him. Expressionlessly, Dugu Feng said, “I alone will be enough to deal with them!”

# Chapter 544: Punishment

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Having said that, Dugu Feng immediately brought out a giant sword made of flames. After a violent jerk of his hand, a blaze of flames began to coil around the blade before an inferno ignited on it. A halo of light burst from the sword. It brought forth such a dazzling glow that the surrounding shadows were completely obliterated.

“Impossible, that’s the essence of fire!”

“It’s the essence of fire, he’s an Earth Saint Master!”

“Everyone run away! He’s an Earth Saint Master!”

At this display of strength, the smarter members of the Defiance Mercenaries quickly became pale in the face. The spurt of courage that had welled up in them earlier had instantly vanished just as quickly it came. Without any more courage to fight, they began to retreat in terror.

A gleam of light flashed in Dugu Feng’s eyes as he twirled his giant sword in a violent motion. The light from the fire on his sword filled the sky. He then quickly brought forth another burst of flames, but this time he directed them down the streets with lightning speed.

“Bang!”

The street was washed with a plume of smoke, and the marble substance on them had crumbled as easily as tofu. A fissure about a third of a meter deep appeared in the street as a surge of Saint Force filled the area; forcing the entire street to tremble as if it was experiencing an earthquake.

Feeling the explosive might that came from a casual swing of Dugu Feng's sword, every member of the Defiance Mercenaries felt miserable beyond belief. At this moment, practically every person could only think about how terrifying an Earth Saint Master was.

Calmly recollecting his sword, Dugu Feng stared emotionlessly at the Defiance Mercenaries. "Whoever crosses this line, consider your life forfeit!" He spat.

The entire group of mercenaries was practically quaking with fear, for the fissure was barely in front of their feet. Everyone could only look at the line as if it represented death itself. Not a single person dared to cross it.

On the other side, the one-armed man could only stare at the red-robed Dugu Feng in shock. He had been thrown into silence by the scene in front of him. The man could hardly believe that the captain of the Flame Mercenaries was capable of commanding an Earth Saint Master to do his bidding.

In the small city that was Wake City, Great Saint Masters were already considered the epitome of strength. In the entire city, there would only be twenty of them at most. Earth Saint Masters would hardly find any worth by heading to such a small city in this area. In the case that one did arrive, then they would indisputably

be the strongest expert around. In the scope of the entire city, none would be a match for them.

Now that the Flame Mercenaries had an Earth Saint Master leveled expert, just who in Wake City would dare go against them?

The Flame Mercenaries were astonished by Dugu Feng's strength as well, but soon their expressions were quickly filled with joy and their bodies began to shake with trepidation. If someone as strong as an Earth Saint Master listened to their captain, then wouldn't that mean that this person was one of their own?

Jian Chen tossed the bottle he had forcibly taken from the one-armed man's hand over to Kai Er, "Hurry up and take the antidote!"

"Yes, captain!" Kai Er enthusiastically responded. Twisting off the stopper to the bottle, they each poured a drop of the liquid into their mouths before they passed the bottle on.

There had been plenty of antidote within the bottle for everyone to have some. Even better, more than half of the bottle remained, contradicting the words that the One-armed Warrior had said earlier about there being a limited supply.

After administering the antidote, every poisoned mercenary soon felt the color return to their faces. Soon enough, the poison was flushed from their systems, and was no longer a threat to their lives.

Jian Chen leaped off his magical beast mount and walked up to Kai Er. “It seems that my return was in time to save your lives. A lot must have happened in these last two years. Why don’t I see Duo Kang, Seth, and Weiss? Where have they gone?”

A grieved look appeared on Kai Er’s face, “Captain, it was all because of our inabilities. The strong mercenary group you left us with is now reduced to these several dozen members. A year ago, Duo Kang, Seth, and Weiss came across an accident that marked their eternal departure from us. From the seven of us, only four remain.”

Jian Chen could only sigh with regret at that. Those seven men had been the strongest men he had managed to bring under his control. At the same time, they served as the pillar of the Flame Mercenaries, so he had felt exceptional concern for the seven.

Suddenly, the whistling sound of air could be heard. The one-armed man took the opportunity to escape while Jian Chen reminisced with the Flame Mercenaries. With a sudden leap, he tried to bound over the rooftops in an attempt to get away.

Jian Chen’s eyes narrowed in irritation, but he did not turn his body or head around. Instead, he pointed a finger behind him. A flash of Sword Qi came flying from his finger and flew through the air with unbelievable speed before coming into contact with the right arm of the One-armed Warrior.

“Ah!” The one-armed man let out a miserable shout. The only arm he had was bisected. It flopped to the floor while a stream of blood came flying out from his arm like a bloody rainstorm.

The One-armed Warrior fell from the sky to the ground in a sorry state of pain. He only had one arm to begin with, and that was the reason why he was known as the One-armed Warrior. For his remaining arm to be gone now, he was nothing more than a handicapped man.

Every single member of the Defiance Mercenaries felt horrified to see their leader crippled. One by one, they looked at Jian Chen with fearful eyes. The One-armed Warrior was the strongest within their Defiance Mercenaries. His defeat was an extreme blow to the Defiance Mercenaries as a whole.

Kai Er and the other three were once more floored by Jian Chen's strength since he had easily cut off and crippled the man's remaining arm. Their faces soon became ecstatic. If the Flame Mercenaries follow a strong figure such as Jian Chen as their captain, then their success would be immeasurable.

"The peerless miracle that our captain has given us has opened my eyes to the world." Mo Tian couldn't help but emotionally remake. His eyes were brimming with tears as he spoke; seeing Jian Chen's strength seemed to have given Mo Tian a glimpse of the glorious tomorrow of the Flame Mercenaries. Having such a strong captain lead the mercenaries would make it extremely hard for the group not to grow.

Jian Chen smiled and looked at the four and sixty members of the Flame Mercenaries with admiration. "You've done well as the pride of the Flame Mercenaries. In the future, I, Jian Chen, will waste no effort to help you grow." After experiencing such

hardships, the remaining members of the Flame Mercenaries were without a doubt worth Jian Chen's respect and his investment to make them strong.

So, Jian Chen felt determined to not even bother training anyone else.

Jian Chen's words made Kai Er and the others extremely happy, "Many thanks to the captain for your guidance."

The previous members of the Flame Mercenaries who chose to live all felt regret appear on their faces. Seeing that there was no way to escape, they could only look back with gloomy and fearful expressions as members of the Defiance Mercenaries. Then looking back to the captain of the Flame Mercenaries, who had suddenly returned, the ones who chose life over death had immediately felt ashamed.

Earlier, they had chosen to live by leaving the Flame Mercenaries after being backed into a corner by the Defiance Mercenaries. They had previously thought they wouldn't need to fear for their lives, but who would have known that the situation would have taken such a drastic turnabout. The tides of victory that the Defiance Mercenaries had once held suddenly changed when the captain of the Flame Mercenaries reappeared to toss them into a hole. Whether they could leave or not would depend on the mood of the Flame Mercenaries. Therefore, the Flame Mercenaries who betrayed them felt incomparably embarrassed and ashamed by their actions to the point where they could hardly look into the eyes of the brothers they had once fought shoulder to shoulder with.



Jian Chen's eyes hovered over the group where the Defiance Mercenaries stood, but the Flame Mercenaries who had chosen to leave could only hang their heads in shame, unable to look at Jian Chen.

"I will leave judgement of the Defiance Mercenaries to you. Whether they die or live, it is up to you to decide." Jian Chen spoke calmly without looking at the ex-members of the Flame Mercenaries.

"The One-armed Warrior and his Defiance Mercenaries must be disposed of. Their hands are stained with the blood of our brothers. How could I not take revenge for my fallen brothers?" Mo Tian's teeth gnashed against each other as he spoke with a murderous fire in his eyes.

Hearing that, the Great Saint Masters of the Defiance Mercenaries grew startled. Giving each other a look, they immediately leaped to the sky. They leapt into every direction possible in order to escape.

They had killed many of the Flame Mercenaries before, so they knew that to stay behind was to await death without hope. As things were, they may as well try their best to escape for a chance at life.

Ming Dong mockingly laughed, "If I let you escape right under my nose, I'd have no face to hand over to my brothers." With that, Ming Dong and Dugu Feng immediately lashed out with their

arms. They shot out several blades of Sword Qi that bisected all of the Great Saint Masters in half. Blood and body parts came raining down from the sky with their deaths.

Watching the strongest members of their group be easily killed by the individuals of the opposing side, the rest of the Defiance Mercenaries had gone ghostly white in terror of Dugu Feng and Ming Dong.

“Please spare us, captain Jian Chen! A thousand pardons! We will leave the Defiance Mercenaries for the Flame Mercenaries and work like oxen if need be! Please forgive us this once! I still have a wife and child to take care of back home!”

“Please forgive us, captain Jian Chen...”

Everyone from the Defiance Mercenaries knew where all the power lay now. Some of the ones unwilling to die began to kneel on the ground and kowtow repeatedly in desperation.

Qingfeng walked up to them step by step, “Our Flame Mercenaries will not kill every last one of you, but we won’t just let you off so easily. Hand over your Space Belts and you may leave.”

“We’ll do it, we’ll do it...”

Qingfeng’s words were like the song of a gospel to the ears of the Defiance Mercenaries. As if they were granted amnesty, not a single one of them hesitated to relinquish their Space Belts. They

obediently handed them over. Two Earth Saint Masters appearing caused their hearts to feel an unbelievable amount of pressure.

Just then, one of the members who previously chose to leave the Flame Mercenaries to live walked up to Qingfeng, “Boss, would it be possible for me to rejoin the Flame Mercenaries? You know that I have family at home unlike the rest of my carefree brothers. I can’t die, and there was no other choice.”

Qingfeng was quiet and turned to look at Jian Chen.

Jian Chen thought for a moment before waving his hand, “You may leave. As thanks for your service for once being a member of the Flame Mercenaries you need not hand over your things, just leave.”

The Defiance Mercenaries had all given their Space Belts before being able to leave from this place in peace. True to their words, the Flame Mercenaries did not kill everyone without reason. However, the traitors that had poisoned them were tied up.

# Chapter 545: The Direction Of Development

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The ex-members that had poisoned the Flame Mercenaries had been bought out by the Defiance Mercenaries a long time ago, and were thus not spared by Kai Er. Their heads were cut off, and their corpses were tossed into the wilderness outside of Wake City for the beasts to feast on.

With everything done and taken care of, the group cleaned up the area around the Kai family's compound before heading straight on in. Within the halls, Jian Chen sat at the very top where the head of the compound would normally sit. At his side was Ming Dong and the five others along with Kai Er and his three companions from the Flame Mercenaries.

“Kai Er, Qingfeng, Mo Tian, and Charcas, what has happened since my departure those years ago? Why has the Flame Mercenaries fallen into such a miserable state?” Jian Chen stared at the four in question.

“Captain, it was all because of our inability. Not only were we unable to expand the Flame Mercenaries, we also let it fall into such a desolate state. If not for the captain coming over to help us, then our Flame Mercenaries may not have survived beyond today.” Kai Er spoke in shame.

“Describe what happened to me in detail. Allow me to understand just what occurred in the past.” Jian Chen spoke.

Kai Er gave a look to the other three for a moment before

summoning up his courage. “Captain, allow me to say it. When you first left, we followed your orders on doing our best to expand the Flame Mercenaries’ strength. At that time our strength was enough to make us undefeatable in Wake City, so our very first step was to reorganize the structure of Wake City and reclaim all the power that had been lost to us.”

“Our plan was performed without a hitch when we were first implementing it. We were trying to bring many of the other clans and powers under our command along with several of the weaker mercenary groups. Thus, the Flame Mercenaries attained another level of power, but there were some factions within Wake City that were unwilling to join with our Flame Mercenaries. Forming an alliance, they began to contend against our Flame Mercenaries. This coalition of theirs was filled with several of the stronger families and mercenaries within the city, making their strength no less than our own. For some time, we battled secretly with them in the shadows of the city receiving damage on both sides. Half a year later it was discovered that the cub of a Class 5 Magical Beast was found. The news was leaked and had made its way to the ears of the enemy alliance. This time, our Flame Mercenaries and that alliance were embroiled in an all out war because of the cub. Both of our sides ended up inflicting a tremendous amount of damage. In the end, our Flame Mercenaries managed to win over the enemy alliance. Alas, Weiss and Seth were both casualties of the war!”

Upon hearing of a Class 5 Magical Beast cub, Jian Chen’s eyes gained a strange light to them. “This cub belongs to the Golden Tiger King doesn’t it.”

“Correct. That cub was indeed the Golden Tiger King’s cub. It was unable to attack because of its adolescence. Hence, our Flame

Mercenaries were able to obtain it. But unfortunately...” Kai Er’s voice began to falter at this point as pain and grief filled his face.

“But what?” Jian Chen’s eyes continued to stare down at Kai Er with the same strange light. There was an unforgivable and unforgettable hatred etched between this Golden Tiger King’s cub and Jian Chen. It was because of this cub that the original captain Kendall was killed and the rest of the members beside him had been buried in the mountain range.

“Ai. It was because of our carelessness that the cub was stolen at night by a secret assailant. Duo Kang gave chase, but he ended up being beheaded. Taking a look at the wreckage later, we were able to ascertain that the assailant that took the cub was in possession of a battle skill.” Qingfeng sighed with regret etched on his face.

“It was all because of my negligence.” Mo Tian regretfully spoke. The anguish on his face could hardly be contained as if he blame himself over Duo Kang’s death.

Jian Chen’s face hardened as he questioned, “Did you manage to find out just who it was that took the cub away?”

“Not a single piece of information was found. That assailant didn’t leave behind any clues for us to find. The cub was never found in Wake City ever again.” Charcas shook his head.

Jian Chen’s eyebrows rose as he began to think to himself.

Meanwhile, Kai Er continued to speak, “After that, our forces were weakened against the might of the alliance. Now stuck at a deadlock, we were very surprised to hear that the alliance had begun to suffer from internal strife. Beginning to fight one another, it led to us witnessing the entire alliance crumble and wither away into ash.”

“We tried to take advantage of the chaos to subdue the rest of the straggling factions, but what we didn’t expect was that another party would come in like the storm and beat us to it. They were the Defiance Mercenaries. Not even a few days later, the leader of the Defiance Mercenaries, the One-armed Warrior, had even come to us and ordered us to swear allegiance to his mercenaries. After our refusal, the Defiance Mercenaries began to act as a foil to our own. There was some sort of unusual connection between city lord and the One-armed Warrior, so they were looked after with special consideration by the city lord. As a result, the Defiance Mercenaries began to explode in development; along the way, our mercenaries came into conflict with theirs several times to end up with what you witnessed today.”

Jian Chen hummed to himself after listening to the entire conversation, “I didn’t think that so much would happen in a short two years. Things have gotten far more complicated than I thought, but this cannot be blamed on you.”

Qingfeng hesitated for a moment before opening his mouth once more, “Captain, there is still one more thing to report.”

“Say it!” Jian Chen spoke.

“Captain, after Weiss’ death, Weiss’ son took over the Dohre clan and withdrew from our Flame Mercenaries. Now that captain has returned, should we have the Dohre clan rejoin us?” Qingfeng asked.

Giving it some consideration, Jian Chen spoke, “No matter what is said, Weiss is a man who died for our Flame Mercenaries and merits a spot as a minister for outstanding service. I will go to his clan tomorrow. It’s getting late now, and you should all go rest. Now that I’ve returned, the Flame Mercenaries’ development will not be stopped. Tomorrow morning, I will have several important announcements for everyone.”

Kai Er and the other three left the hall so that Jian Chen and his group of seven were the only ones left.

“Jian Chen, so this is your mercenary group? There’s only four Great Saint Masters and an unremarkable amount of strength, but that isn’t important. With our strengths, it won’t take long for us to transform the Flame Mercenaries into the strongest mercenary group in the Blue Wind Kingdom.” Ming Dong spoke.

“En, that is my plan as well. So, in light of this, does anyone have any favorable plans we may try?” Jian Chen asked.

“Simple, we must build up our army. As long as you announce the fact that there are seven Earth Saint Masters, I am sure many mercenaries would be willing to join us.” Ming Dong suggested.

“While that is a decent plan, it will only bring forth the people



with hidden agendas. We cannot find everyone, and it won't be long in the future that another repeat of today's events happen again. In my eyes, we should make our soldiers an elite squad, but in a controllable number. An elite squad of a hundred can defeat a mob of a thousand civilians." Dugu Feng spoke.

"Oh, that's not bad. Dugu Feng's suggestion has some merit to it. Why don't we just spend some time and blood in training these soldiers into becoming the elite soldiers we want?" Ming Dong asked.

"Training them to become elite soldiers is a must. These soldiers are ones that I find suitable in both my mind and in reality, but it isn't enough. My goal is that in the future, the Flame Mercenaries will become the strongest on the Tian Yuan Continent. It will take a very long time, but this cannot be done slowly. I must move fast, move swiftly." Jian Chen said.

"Then I have a suggestion, everyone please consult about this as you see fit." You Yue finally spoke up from her long-seated silence. "Jian Chen, if you wish to develop the Flame Mercenaries as quick as possible, then there is really only one path for you to go. You must go to the stronger cities and subdue all of the stronger mercenary groups under your control. With your strength, as long as you don't come across any Heaven Saint Masters, you will meet no obstruction."

"If we do that, then even if they swear allegiance to us on the surface, who knows what they just might do in secret. The things that happened today should be a lesson." Senior An spoke.

“That isn’t something we should worry about. In the face of absolute power, any machinations become as threatening as a paper tiger. The men with brains will see the strength of our group and know what they ought to do. To follow us would be to further their paths and reach a new height. If they stay within the mercenary group for long enough, they will come to love and cherish the group. Just like a civilian that lives in a kingdom, they will come to love the kingdom and cherish it as their family.” The princess spoke. “Moreover, Jian Chen is a Heaven Saint Master and a very strong one at that. The amount of individuals like him in any single kingdom is known to be scarce no matter where you are. To have a Heaven Saint Master as your patron is something every single person hopes for. To have a Heaven Saint Master as their patron is to have their statuses elevated even if they themselves are not strong. Needless to say they will not fear some other force swallowing their power whole. Thus, they have no reason to decline joining us.”

Everyone had fallen silent after You Yue gave her piece. They all knew that she had only spoken words of pure logic. Truly, in the face of absolute power, any machination or secret plots were nothing more than paper tigers. No matter how big the wave, there would be no internal strife within the group as long as their captain remained upright.

Jian Chen sat in silence as well as he processed her words. Taking notes of the detailed plan of You Yue, Jian Chen finally smiled and nodded his head, “That isn’t bad at all. Let us work as such.”

Having her own plan be approved by Jian Chen caused You Yue’s face to reveal a delightful smile. “However there is one thing to be cautious about. When using force to make them submit, do not

remove all forms of power from their previous leaders; otherwise, even if they submit, their anger for you will never be forgotten. Their mercenary groups were after all founded on hard work as well. If all of your hard work was so easily dismissed and taken away by someone else, I doubt there is a single person in the world that would accept such a slap in the face.”

# Chapter 546: Increase Of Strength

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“That is only natural. You Yue, your plan is quite impressive. The Flame Mercenaries will use this method from now on to become the strongest in the shortest amount of time possible.” Jian Chen laughed with a happy smile on his face. Then as if thinking of something else, the smile receded from his face, “However before we can develop the group, I still have several things that I need to take care of. Well, we will adjourn here for now. Everyone should go rest, we will continue this talk tomorrow.”

Kai Er had long since had his family prepare the most fanciful of rooms for Jian Chen and his entourage to rest in. Aside from the servants of the Kai family tidying up the broken bits and pieces of the courtyard and gates, only the sounds of the night could be heard.

While Jian Chen and his group slept, news of the events that had transpired within the courtyards of the Kai family quickly made their way around the city. It didn't take long for the news to reach its way back to the mansion of the city lord.

Within the mansion, the city lord Yun Li could be seen sitting by his table with a cup of tea in hand. If it were any other time, then the lord would have long since retired to his bed for the night, but today was different. He knew that tonight would be the night that the Defiance Mercenaries would clash with the Flame Mercenaries. After tonight, there would no longer be a Flame Mercenaries in Wake City, only the Defiance Mercenaries.

Just then, a black-robed man came scurrying into the room and kneeled on the ground. “A report for the city lord. The captain of the Flame Mercenaries has returned. The Defiance Mercenaries have been killed, and the leader, the One-armed Warrior, has been crippled and captured by them. The remaining Great Saint Masters were all beheaded in their attempt to escape while the remaining members forfeited their Space Belts in order to live and escape in peace.”

“What!? Their captain who hasn’t returned in two years has actually come back? And he’s captured the One-armed Warrior as well you say?” Yun Li was astonished — he didn’t expect this outcome at all.

“Yes, my lord. As of now, all of the Great Saint Masters of the Defiance Mercenaries have been wholly slaughtered. Their mercenary group is no more.” The informant relayed.

Yun Li’s face paled by several shades of white for a moment before he slowly calmed himself. With a wave of his hand, he commanded, “You may leave!”

“Your subordinate will withdraw for now!” The informant immediately disappeared into the palace halls.

After the informant left, Yun Li’s face hardened in worry as his eyebrows knit together. With a slow sigh, he murmured to himself, “Who would have imagined that Jian Chen would actually return at this moment. Truly, the machinations of man are superseded by those of the Heavens...”

The Blue Wind Kingdom was millions of kilometers away from Mercenary City. In just travel time alone, it would take roughly half a year to get from one to the other. That was the reason why no news had made its way from there yet, so the city lord would naturally not know about the events that transpired in Mercenary City.

Early the next morning, all sixty or so members of the Flame Mercenaries gathered in the Kai family's courtyard. They stood tall and proudly with their eyes gleaming with brightness. In front of them, Jian Chen, Ming Dong, Dugu Feng, Yun Zheng, Senior An, Tie Ta, and You Yue stood carefree.

Jian Chen's eyes wandered over the group of people in front of him before he worked up an impassioned expression to make a speech. "From today on, our Flame Mercenaries will begin our climb in earnest! Our next goal is to become the strongest mercenary group within the Blue Wind Kingdom as soon as possible, and then the strongest mercenary group within the area. As of now, I will be serious and make an announcement."

Pausing briefly to take in a deep breath, Jian Chen pointed at Ming Dong, "This is Ming Dong, and from now on, he will be the vice-captain of our Flame Mercenaries. His power will be just below mine, but higher than everyone else's. Does anyone have any objections?"

"There are none! We welcome our new vice-captain!" Kai Er had been the first to express his approval. Ming Dong may be as young as his son, but after witnessing how Ming Dong had so easily killed

the experts of the Defiance Mercenaries last night, he was well convinced of his strength. An Earth Saint Master was one that they could hardly afford to invite, so how could they refuse?

“There are no objections! We welcome our new vice-captain, Ming Dong!”

“Welcome to the new vice-captain!”

One by one, the members of the Flame Mercenaries began to cheer and welcome Ming Dong with jubilant expressions.

Continuing on, Jian Chen said, “This is Dugu Feng. His strength has been made clear to everyone I presume. As an expert of the Earth Saint Master level, he will be given a position as an elder within our Flame Mercenaries.”

This time, Jian Chen’s statement of Dugu Feng’s strength had caused every single member to feel exuberant with happiness. Right now, their loyalty to the Flame Mercenaries in their hearts grew so deep that should the need arise, they would lay their lives down for it. The Flame Mercenaries were even more important than their own families. With the addition of two Earth Saint Masters to their group, just how could they not be happy?

The faces of Kai Er, Qingfeng, Mo Tian, and Charcas in particular were essentially streaming with tears. It was clear to them that the days of suffering for the Flame Mercenaries were finally over. What they would now welcome would be the dawn of a glorious tomorrow.

Jian Chen's heartstrings began to tug as he looked at the excited faces of everyone. When he saw the deep expressions on their faces, Jian Chen knew that these men were the true pillars of the Flame Mercenaries. Despite their strengths not being that great, these members were true and faithful to the Flame Mercenaries.

Jian Chen took in a deep breath to school his emotions before continuing with his speech, "These three are Yun Zheng, Senior An, and Tie Ta. Yun Zheng and Senior An are both Earth Saint Masters as well. They will serve as the law keepers for our mercenaries."

Upon hearing that both Yun Zheng and Senior An were Earth Saint Masters, the Flame Mercenaries exploded into a rambunctious cheer. Their emotions flooded their faces at an unprecedented speed.

The excitement continued for some time before Jian Chen held up his palm to calm the crowd. "Tie Ta is a Great Saint Master, but he will hold the same position of power as Kai Er, Qingfeng, Mo Tian, and Charcas. Henceforth, the mercenaries here today will be the core of the Flame Mercenaries. Everything you might need for your cultivation such as funding, living expenses, or anything else required by you mercenaries will be handled by the entirety of the group. The monster cores required for your cultivation will be provided for your strength to be increased." By now, Jian Chen possessed a mountain of monster cores and a surplus of wealth that could rival an entire nation. To provide for these sixty or so men whose strengths were at the Great Saint Master would be nothing more than a single hair from nine cows.



Furthermore, these men had experienced a trail of fire to prove their loyalty. Hence, they were worth Jian Chen's time to nurture and train.

Jian Chen's words caused the entire mercenary group to fly into another frenzy once more. Why did they become mercenaries? Was it not to hunt the monster cores from the magical beasts to cultivate? Was it not for exchanging these cores for money to cover their living expenses? With Jian Chen now handling the expenditures for both monster cores and their costs of living, all of their worries in life practically alleviated. They could dedicate the rest of their time and energy to cultivating. No more would they have to fight with others for monster cores. This alone brought them no small amount of elation.

This tremendous windfall was so sudden that many of the men thought that they had fallen into a dream. The events that were happening in front of them simply couldn't be real. They had to be an illusion!

Jian Chen took out a white jade bottle from his Space Ring, "This is an unbelievable heavenly resource that money cannot buy in this world. Its name is the Hundred Grass Wine. It has the ability to increase your strength, so I will grant you all a drop." Jian Chen unstopped the bottle and allowed a drop of the green liquid to slowly pour out one at a time. Once it was in the air it floated up beside Jian Chen.

After having poured out the rest of the bottle and using his mind to float them in the air, Jian Chen had the droplets delivered to the

sixty members, Kai Er, and the other three.

Everyone could only stare blankly at the floating green droplets. Jian Chen's method of delivery had surprised them. For a bizarre sight like this was something they had never seen before.

Seeing the stunned looks on everyone's faces, Jian Chen revealed a faint smile, "Hurry and drink it. If exposed too long to the outside world, its potency will decrease!"

As if shaken from their stupor, every single mercenary immediately opened their mouths to swallow the liquid. A surge of boundless energy began to fill the entirety of their being as soon as the green liquid entered their stomachs. It caused the members to feel greatly shocked. Some of them even fell to the ground in a seated position so they could fully dedicate themselves to digesting the raw energy coursing through their bodies.

The thousands of years old Hundred Grass Wine was something that had the greatest benefit on an individual of the Heaven Saint Master level. Jian Chen himself had used the Hundred Grass Wine to increase the power of his mind. In Kargath Academy, it had even been enough to force Khafir through the bottleneck he had been stuck at for many years. From this, it could be seen that the potency of the Hundred Grass Wine was extremely effective. Despite this, Jian Chen was still willing to let each member have a drop of the wine. The Great Saints or Saint Masters strength would substantially increase after receiving such a boundless amount of energy packed in this drop of wine.

An hour later, Qingfeng, Kai Er, Mo Tian, and Charcas were the

first four to reawaken. The four Great Saint Master's eyes flew open and a brilliant light could be seen in them.

“I've actually reached the pinnacle of a Great Saint Master. There is just one more step needed for me to become an Earth Saint Master!” The look of shock on Kai Er's face could hardly be repressed as he spoke with excitement.

“I too have gone from a middle Great Saint Master to a peak Great Saint Master!” Qingfeng spoke passionately. After drinking a drop of the Hundred Grass Wine, the four of them had all reached the very peak stage of a Great Saint Master. From there, it was only a short step away from becoming an Earth Saint Master.

# Chapter 547: Imparting A Battle Skill

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After the four of them had woken up, several of the Flame Mercenaries awoke as well. Sensing that their strengths had improved by a substantial amount, expressions of joy filled their faces. These men were originally middle Saint Masters or high Saint Masters. Now, practically a dozen of them had broken through to become a Great Saint Master after they finished off the Hundred Grass Wine.

A candle's worth of time later, the last few dozen people finally woke up. When they felt how much their strength had increased, they were so happy that they couldn't help but let out cries of joy.

Everyone in the Flame Mercenaries was ecstatic by this point. Every single Great Saint had become a Saint Master. Not a single one was below a Saint Master in strength, and even the ones who were originally middle Saint Masters had become Great Saint Masters. The men who were low Great Saint Masters were now high Great Saint Masters.

Not even two hours into the meeting and the strength of the entire Flame Mercenaries had skipped several steps. Even if Jian Chen wasn't here, their new strength would be more than enough to rule a small city like Wake City. Even the city lord would not be able to gather an equivalent amount of strength.

“A thousand thanks for the captain's charity!” The mercenaries all bowed down with a grand shout. Each one of them was especially happy.

Jian Chen smiled, “Although you’ve all grown stronger, your battle strength still needs to be trained, so you can become accustomed to your new strength. I will give you all a hundred purple coins each. Go and purchase the necessities to live in the wilderness. Tomorrow morning, we will head to the Magical Beast Mountain Range and train. You will only be able to return if you can kill three Class 4 Magical Beasts by yourself without help. Kai Er, Mo Tian, Qingfeng, and Charcas, you four will form a group and follow them. You will listen to my requests as well before you four may leave.”

Jian Chen’s words made every single mercenary grow serious. To fight a magical beast on par with them was a very tall order to fulfill. It would normally take about two or three men to kill a magical beast of their strength because their fortitude, muscles, and build outclassed a human. Only the strongest of men would be able to go head-to-head with them, and very few would be able to prevail against one.

When Jian Chen decreed that they all had to kill three of them by themselves, they felt that this would be a mission that they would never be able to accomplish or come back alive.

“Captain, as of now, killing a single Class 4 Magical Beast is hard enough, but for us to kill three of them, isn’t that too much to ask?” Charcas asked.

Jian Chen shook his head, “It isn’t difficult at all. As a Saint, I hunted Class 2 Magical Beasts. As a Great Saint, I hunted Class 3 Magical Beasts. Then as a Saint Master, I fought Class 4 Magical Beasts. If I can do it, then everyone will be able to do the same.

This trip to the mountain range is a training trip to increase your battle strength. Remember that when you gain the strength to fight enemies of your own level, then your battle experience, skill, and speed will increase dramatically. Those three points are most critical, so remember them when you go.”

Pausing for a moment, Jian Chen stared seriously at everyone. “I still have something to give to everyone when we arrive at the Magical Beast Mountain Range. It’ll lend a hand in improving your strength, do you all understand now?”

Jian Chen fished out a bag of purple coins from his Space Ring and began to give everyone a hundred purple coins to buy equipment with. Although it wouldn’t need such a large sum for such things, these mercenaries still had families they needed to provide for.

While Jian Chen had handed them all a very serious and worrisome mission, the mercenaries couldn’t help but smile when they saw the shimmering glint of the hundred purple coins.

A single purple coin was worth a hundred gold coins. A few purple coins was more than enough for an entire family to live half a generation of luxury. Therefore, a sum like this was more than enough to spend on an entire lifetime.

After receiving the sum of money, each of the mercenaries departed from the Kai family’s courtyards with happy faces. They were headed to the nearby markets.

“Kai Er, Qingfeng, Mo Tian, Charcas, come with me!” Jian Chen called for the four to follow him to his own personal room.

Kai Er and the others followed close behind until they got to his room. As soon as they arrived, Jian Chen placed a single tattered but simple book on top of the table.

Handing the books over to the four, Jian Chen explained, “There is a total of eight battle skills in here — six Human-Tier Battle Skills and two Earth-Tier Battle Skills. You may take this and learn from it.”

Kai Er and the other three began to shake at the mention of ‘battle skill’. The book in front of them made their blood boil in excitement, and Jian Chen’s explanation brought them such shock that their bodies nearly began to spasm.

Charcas’ face was completely red as he spoke with a quavering voice. “Captain, is... is... is this true? Are these really six Human-Tier Battle Skills and two Earth-Tier Battle Skills? And you’re... you’re really giving them to us?”

A battle skill was an extremely precious treasure on the continent. It was far more valuable than cultivation methods, and even thousands and thousands of gold wouldn’t be able to buy one. Even the lowest tier of Human-Tier Battle Skills was extremely pricy so that any mercenary would hardly be able to afford one. Only the strongest individuals or the most influential ones would be able to obtain such battle skills.

Earth-Tier Battle Skills were even more priceless, especially to Earth Saint Masters. Only a small portion of them possessed an Earth-Tier Battle Skill, but Jian Chen had given them a present that contained two. This was a windfall that made the four of them wild with joy.

Laughing at how excited they were, Jian Chen smiled, “It is as you say. You are the senior figures of the Flame Mercenaries. With all the years of suffering you four have undergone for the sake of the development of the Flame Mercenaries, I, Jian Chen, will definitely do my best to train you four in thanks for your loyalty. These eight battle skills are yours to learn. Pass them onto the rest of the mercenaries after you’re done. Those who are not yet Great Saint Masters are only permitted to learn the Human-Tier Battle Skills, the Earth-Tier Battle Skills are not something they are capable of learning yet. The Great Saint Masters are free to learn them if they wish.”

“Captain, for all your efforts in helping to train us, we will make sure that we won’t disappoint you! For the rest of our lives, we will follow you anywhere, to death even with unflinching loyalty!” Kai Er and the other three gratefully bowed.

Smiling at the four, Jian Chen had them rise back to their feet. “Work hard, you four. I will not treat any one of my brothers unfairly. When you become Earth Saint Masters, then I will impart a Heaven-Tier Battle Skill to you.”

Again, the four of them began to tremble violently as they became slack-jawed. The words ‘Heaven-Tier Battle Skill’ were even louder than a clap of thunder to their ears and could make



anyone lose their train of thought in a second. For a while, they remained blank before finally returning to awareness.

In their eyes, a Heaven-Tier Battle Skill was a paramount of a treasure. Very few Heaven Saint Masters possessed them, and not a single one of the Heaven Saint Masters in the Blue Wind Kingdom possessed such a battle skill. With Jian Chen suddenly telling them that they would receive a Heaven-Tier Battle Skill when even the Heaven Saint Masters of the Blue Wind Kingdom did not own one, they could hardly believe their ears.

A very long time later, Charcas was the first to snap back to awareness. Shocked, he looked to Jian Chen and asked, “Captain, do you... do you really have a Heaven-Tier Battle Skill!?”

Smiling and nodding, Jian Chen replied, “Correct. I have a Heaven-Tier Battle Skill and not just one either.” By now, Jian Chen did not need to hide the fact that he possessed Heaven-Tier Battle Skills. With his strength, he was more than strong enough to protect them from Heaven Saint Masters at the very least. Not a single person would dare to try to start trouble with him.

Charcas continued to stare blankly at Jian Chen with his mouth wide open. The entirety of what he heard just now was far too unbelievable.

Just then, Jian Chen looked away for a moment with a smile, “An acquaintance has stopped by. Let us go greet him!”

Walking out of the room, Jian Chen was followed by Kai Er and

the others with wooden expressions. They were clearly still processing what they had heard back in the room.

Walking into the courtyards, Jian Chen saw the rather regal-looking city lord Yun Li smiling and chatting with Ming Dong.

The moment Jian Chen stepped into the courtyard, Yun Li had discovered him from the corner of his eyes. Immediately smiling to welcome him, Yun Li said, “Aiya, brother Jian Chen! You’ve finally returned. I heard you participated in the Gathering of the Mercenaries two years ago. I felt quite concerned for a good while, afraid that my dear brother Jian Chen would come into danger. But seeing you now, I can see that my concerns were unfounded. How young and promising you are, and how powerful! Even if it’s danger, you are able to turn it into fortune! Seeing how healthy and impressive you are, I can only assume that you’ve made quite the achievement for yourself in the Gathering of the Mercenaries!”

Cupping his hands, Jian Chen smiled, “The city lord certainly has been worried. The Gathering of the Mercenaries has given me a new lease on life. With good fortune, I was able to survive and prosper.”

## Chapter 548: To The Ruler Of The City

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The city ruler Yun Li was very shocked to hear what Jian Chen said. Originally he had thought that Jian Chen didn't even make it to Mercenary City. Very few Great Saint Masters were likely to survive to join the Gathering of the Mercenaries. Not only did Jian Chen say he had participated, he survived.

“What a fortunate kid!” Yun Li thought to himself, but the emotions on his face did not betray his thoughts as he continued to smile. “Hahaha, that is only proof of your strength. If you were able to make the journey to Mercenary City, then you must have benefitted greatly from the experience.”

“There was indeed bountiful experience gained, but it's not worth mentioning.” Jian Chen courteously replied.

As Yun Li continued to chat happily with Jian Chen, his eyes began to observe Kai Er and the other three every so often. According to his senses, he was more than capable enough to see the massive transformation the four of them had undergone. Startled, he thought to himself, “Peak Great Saint Masters! They're that strong? But how? They were barely middle Great Saint Masters before Jian Chen came back. What prompted this sudden breakthrough? How did they become as strong as me so quickly?”

He tried not to think about Kai Er and the other three. Instead, he tried to talk to Jian Chen about more important topics before leaving in a hurry.

After Yun Li left, Qingfeng sneered. “That Yun Li is an unsavory character. He helped the Defiance Mercenaries grow in secret before, does he think we don’t know that?”

“That’s right, at the time of the collapse of the alliance, the One-armed Warrior had just arrived in Wake City with some of his followers. If it weren’t for Yun Li helping them, the One-armed Warrior wouldn’t have so easily gained strength.” Charcas spoke venomously with clear signs of hostility between him and Yun Li.

Jian Chen’s eyes flashed with an icy light for a moment as he listened, but without another word more, he turned to Kai Er, “Let us go to the Dohre clan.”

The Dohre clan once possessed some name to it in Wake City as one of the major powers before. When their previous head of the family Weiss left the world, the Dohre family was left with his son as the acting head. When they left the Flame Mercenaries, their power in the city had taken a huge loss in strength and authority since Weiss had been their only Great Saint Master.

Riding the Class 3 Magical Beast mounts, Jian Chen and the six others arrived in front of the gates where the Dohre family resided. The four mercenaries had led the way. The Dohre family no longer displayed the same glorious splendor they had in the past. The ancient-looking doors were closed shut and leaves were scattered everywhere. Even guards weren’t seen anywhere, making the area look rather desolate and abandoned.

A moment after Kai Er knocked upon the ancient-looking doors, they began to open to reveal a white-haired elder. Clearly

recognizing Kai Er, the elder immediately gave a smile and greeted him, “So it was you, lord Kai Er. Come in, come in please.” Hurriedly opening the door, the elder began to welcome him inside.

“Hurry up and call out Wei Ji. Tell him the captain of the Flame Mercenaries has returned.”

“The captain of the Flame Mercenaries!” Stunned, the elder looked at the men riding the magical beasts outside the doors and snapped back to awareness. “Ye-yes! I will go retrieve the lord!” Having said that, the elder stumbled back into the interior of the compound.

Pushing open the doors the rest of the way, Kai Er said to Jian Chen, “Captain, please come in!”

Dismounting from his mount, Jian Chen strolled into the compound.

At that moment, the newly informed Wei Ji came hurrying on over along with two females. The acting head of the Dohre clan, Wei Ji, was also the only son of Weiss.

“Wei Ji pays his respects to the captain!” Wei Ji was no stranger to Jian Chen and immediately bowed to him.

“This one pays her respects to the captain!” The middle-aged woman followed Wei Ji’s example and bowed down to Jian Chen

with panic. Only the child that looked several years old continued to stare at Jian Chen with wide open eyes.

Jian Chen's gaze softened as he looked at Weiji. Smiling, he said, "Weiji, this must be your wife and child!"

"Yes, captain! This is my wife and child!" Weiji was nervous in his response to Jian Chen. When his father had passed away from battle, he had taken the initiative to leave the Flame Mercenaries. Now that the captain had returned and had personally come to visit, Weiji was more than nervous and afraid that Jian Chen came to condemn them.

Amicably, Jian Chen smiled at Weiji, "Weiji, please relax. I came here today for a social visit only. No matter what is said, your Dohre family was once members of the Flame Mercenaries. Your father died for our Flame Mercenaries, his services and achievements will never be forgotten to us!"

Weiji could only sigh in relief having heard those words. At the mention of his deceased father, his eyes began to tear up.

"Weiji. When I wasn't here in the past, the Flame Mercenaries suffered greatly. Now that I've returned, the Flame Mercenaries will not stop its development. Will you be willing to rejoin the Flame Mercenaries? The achievements your father worked hard to achieve for us will be remembered by me as if you had done the same. I will do my best to help make you grow stronger." Jian Chen continued.

Weiji hesitated for a moment. Looking at his wife and child, he shook his head. “Captain, I truly wish to apologize, but this one has no ambitions for greatness or power. I only wish to protect the remaining pieces of stability and giving peace to my family instead of spending me time around the continent. I have no desire to throw away my life for a struggle that could claim it at any moment.”

Jian Chen let out a sigh. “That is fine too. If you wish to live in peace and stability, then I won’t force you out of it. Your father dedicated his entire being to my mercenary group, and even sacrificed his life for it. Even with his departure, I will remember his achievements and reward you for them in his place.” Jian Chen retrieved several Space Belts he had prepared beforehand from his Space Ring and handed them over to Weiji, “Inside these are a few coins and monster cores. In place of your father, I will give them to you. Take them, and I hope that in the future I can count on your assistance once more.”

Misty-eyed and emotionally affected, Weiji’s hand trembled as it accepted the Space Belts handed to him by Jian Chen. When he had learned that the captain had returned, Weiji feared that he would be tortured by the group, and had been nervous as a result. It had been beyond his wildest dreams that Jian Chen did not blame him or rebuke him, and had instead handed him a present of money and monster cores.

“Ma... many thanks to the captain for his charity!” Weiji exclaimed.

Smiling, Jian Chen replied, “Although your father has left, it

should be my responsibility to look after his offspring. In the case that your Dohre clan comes across any trouble, then seek out the Flame Mercenaries. On that note, I will bid you farewell from here!” With that said, Jian Chen turned around to leave, and got on his Class 3 Magical Beast mount.

Traveling on top of his mount in no hurry, Jian Chen felt the snowy-white tiger cub still sleeping in content against his chest as it digested the resources in its body.

Jian Chen slowly rubbed the furry head of the tiger cub sleeping against his chest. With the large amount of heavenly resources the tiger cub had been fed, the cub had grown exponentially stronger, and had already reached the same level as a Class 4 Magical Beast.

Ming Dong, Kai Er, and the others followed Jian Chen from behind. They had learned of the tiger cub Jian Chen had a long time ago, but everyone had thought that Jian Chen was merely raising it to be a cute pet; therefore, they paid it no attention.

“Kai Er, you received a Class 5 Magical Beast cub, just who in the world stole it?” Jian Chen suddenly asked.

Kai Er hesitated for a moment, prompting Qingfeng to speak up for him, “We had many of our men fan out and search the city, but we never found any clues of who might have committed such an act. The same evening the cub was stolen, we had our men watch the city gates. If any person had been seen carrying a cub out of the city, we would have been notified. Even several days later, not a single piece of information was reported to us. No news of the one responsible was reported, so we all figured that the Class 5 Magical



Beast cub had already been snuck out of the city, escaping into any possible direction.”

“The Golden Tiger King’s cub carries an unforgettable story with our Flame Mercenaries.” Jian Chen sighed as he thought back to the past and what had transpired back then.

Confused by the look of Jian Chen, Kai Er asked, “Captain, what type of relationship is there between the cub and our mercenary group?”

“Hatred!” Jian Chen stated with his eyes closed.

Kai Er and the other three still remained confused. Although they had joined the group for a decent amount of time, they were still unclear of what had happened to the group in the past.

“Captain, just what in the world happened with the tiger cub to cause such hatred?” Qingfeng asked curiously, but no answer had been given to him.

Having received no response, the group of four had taken note that Jian Chen was unwilling to respond to them. Thus, they could only obediently close their mouths without any further questions.

Suddenly, Jian Chen’s eyes flew open as he began to radiate a tremendous amount of killing intent. “Come, let us head to the city lord’s mansion!” He growled.

# Chapter 549: Culprit Of Stealing Away The Cub (One)

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Jian Chen's face grew progressively darker and more malicious as he whirled into a different direction. He then lead the group toward the city lord's mansion.

The group was confused by Jian Chen's sudden transformation. None of them were able to tell just what could happen to make Jian Chen act as such.

Despite their befuddlement, the look on Jian Chen's face was enough to make them silent and follow from behind.

The mansion of the city lord was located at the center of Wake City, so Jian Chen rode his magical beast mount through the streets to his destination much to the curious but envious eyes of every spectator around. In the small city that was Wake City, a Class 3 Magical Beast mount was an extremely rare sight to behold and could hardly be seen at all. Seven of them appearing at once was a very eye-catching sight for every person on the streets. It called for many mercenaries to begin to talk to themselves.

“Look at those youths riding on top of the magical beast mounts, and look at their rich-looking clothes! These men have to be the young children of some sort of powerful family.”

“Look! Look how pretty that female in the middle is, she's practically a fairy! I swear on my wretched life that she has to be the most beautiful woman I've ever seen. I can barely even

breath!”

“Eh? Aren’t those four the heads of the Flame Mercenaries standing right behind them? Strange, why do they look like they’re servants for that group?”

“I’ve heard that the captain of the Flame Mercenaries came back out of the blue last night. Could the men on top of the magical beast mounts be related to the captain?”

“I’ve heard that the captain is very strong, especially at his age. Wouldn’t that person leading the front up there be him?”

“I think I heard someone say earlier today that the One-armed Warrior of the Defiance Mercenaries was crippled by the captain. All of the remaining experts of the Defiance Mercenaries were killed and the group was dissolved. I wonder if that rumor is true...”

As Jian Chen and his group traversed the streets, everyone turned to look and chatter among themselves about this phenomenon in front of them. However, Jian Chen turned a deaf ear to their words and didn’t bother to pay attention to them at all.

Soon, the group arrived at the city lord’s mansion where Kai Er immediately strode forward to negotiate with the guards at the gates. “The captain of the Flame Mercenaries has come to pay a visit. Please notify the city lord!”

The Flame Mercenaries were very well known throughout Wake City, so when the guard heard that the captain had come to pay a visit, he didn't dare to neglect his duties. He immediately went off to report to the city lord.

When Yun Li had received news that Jian Chen was here, he immediately threw whatever item he had down and went out to receive him. After several words of greeting, Jian Chen and Yun Li both walked into the greater halls.

“Brother Jian Chen, I didn't think that you would come to the mansion in person. What an honor it is to receive you in my home.” Yun Li laughed with happiness.

The dark expression on Jian Chen's face was nowhere to be seen since his arrival. Smiling in reply, he said, “When you visit a temple, you visit with a reason. Here I am today with the hope that the city lord will be able to help me with something.”

“Hahahaha, brother Jian Chen, you are far too polite. Whatever it is you need assistance with, I will do my best to assist. There is no need for this politeness.” Yun Li laughed.

Pausing for a moment, Jian Chen replied, “City lord, my Flame Mercenaries were once in possession of a Class 5 Magical Beast cub before, but it was unfortunately stolen from a thief one night. Not only did he kill a senior figure of my group, the Flame Mercenaries had spent a tremendous amount of time and energy to find the culprit to no avail. This, this one hopes that the city lord will help assist our Flame Mercenaries to bring this assassin to light!”

“That’ll be no problem at all! Rest assured, brother Jian Chen. I will dispatch my men straight away to search the city to help find this assailant to bring them to justice.” Yun Li waved his hand without hesitation to help coordinate with Jian Chen.

“Then I’ll be troubling you with this task.” Jian Chen cupped his hands with a smile.

Yun Li laughed, “It’ll be no trouble. It’s a small matter to me. Brother Jian Chen, I am twenty or so years older than you. If you don’t mind, please just think of me as your brother. In the future, should you ever have any need for this older brother, please allow me to help you.”

Kai Er, Qingfeng, Mo Tian, and Charcas snorted to themselves in secret as they gave disdainful glares at Yun Li behind Jian Chen’s back.

They didn’t know what level of strength Jian Chen was now, but if Jian Chen was capable of being able to give out a Heaven Tier Battle Skill, then his strength definitely couldn’t be belittled. Seated at such a high level of power, a small city ruler like Yun Li was in a completely different field of influence than Jian Chen.

“City lord, let us talk about that after we find the culprit responsible. With that assailant being the one responsible for killing a senior figure of the Flame Mercenaries, I swear on my name of Jian Chen that I won’t let them go unpunished. Right now I only wish to dedicate myself to finding that man.” Jian Chen’s

words were tantamount to a refusal of what Yun Li had asked.

Yun Li had remained unruffled despite the refusal Jian Chen handed out. “If brother Jian Chen wishes to find that assailant, then your older brother will naturally help you. As long as it is within Wake City, there is nothing your older brother cannot resolve.” He smiled. Waving for several of his soldiers, Yun Li commanded them with a serious expression, “Go and notify commander Duo Li. Have him lead a detachment of troops through the city and check the experts hidden throughout the city.”

“This servant will do as instructed!” The soldier replied before retreating.

“One moment!” Jian Chen suddenly called out. “City lord, there is no need for such an inconvenient way of searching for the culprit. That unknown expert has most likely changed his face so we wouldn’t know what to look for. However, there is a definite method to find them. The Class 5 Magical Beast cub is still with them, so we just need to focus our efforts on finding the cub. This way our goal will be much easier.”

“That’s right, absolutely right!” Yun Li completely agreed. “As expected from the intelligent Jian Chen! What quick-witted thinking. This way, our troubles will be lessened. After stealing a Class 5 Magical Beast, there would be no way that the culprit would let it escape his control so easily. As long as we find the Class 5 Magical Beast cub, then we will find the culprit with it.”

“It is as the city lord says. As long as we find the cub, we will find the assailant that dared strike at my Flame Mercenaries and kill a

senior figure. Furthermore, the city lord's information network is quite effective, would you happen to have information of what happened with the cub in the few days after it was stolen from my Flame Mercenaries?" Jian Chen's eyes attentively stared down Yun Li as he questioned.

Yun Li's expression remained unchanged. Letting out a sigh, he replied, "Brother Jian Chen, you overestimate your older brother's spy network. It isn't able to delve too deeply into anything, and for something like the Class 5 Magical Beast cub, this older brother knows nothing about it. Perhaps the thief has already left Wake City?"

"Left Wake City, is that true?" Jian Chen muttered with a glint of ice flashing through his eyes. "Everyone, with me!" Without informing Yun Li, Jian Chen began to leave the halls.

Yun Li's face faltered slightly after seeing the retreating back of Jian Chen. Quickly recovering, he chased after him with cordial urging, "Brother Jian Chen, why leave so soon? Come and sit for a while. Your older brother will have some of my men prepare a feast to welcome your victorious return from Mercenary City."

"Who said I was leaving? I only wished to turn around. Lord Yun Li, if you don't mind, please accompany us!" Jian Chen spoke, but this time, his voice was considerably more frigid than before.

"Haha, then allow your older brother to be your guide around here. The flower garden is this way, why not take a seat there?" Yun Li began to pull Jian Chen's arm in the direction of the flower garden.

Jian Chen shook his arm to force away Yun Li's palm. "Who said I wished to go to the flower garden? Lord Yun Li, you should follow us quietly." Jian Chen didn't even spare him a glance as he spoke to him with an even colder tone. He walked to the second story of the building.

Troubled by the sudden change in the tone of Jian Chen's words, Yun Li was further shocked to realize just where Jian Chen was walking. Hurriedly running after him, Yun Li said, "Brother Jian Chen, that is my resting room. Why are you going there?"

This time, Jian Chen did not pay attention to Yun Li. Yun Li had originally wanted to stop Jian Chen from walking into his personal chamber, but how could Jian Chen be stopped by someone like him?

The smile that had been on Yun Li's face had finally disappeared now that he was exasperated with Jian Chen's actions. Staring hard at Jian Chen, he said with a low voice, "Jian Chen, just what are you doing? Explain your actions."

"You'll find out in a moment." Jian Chen laughed. They had by now reached his resting rooms. Jian Chen then kicked down the door to walk in.

Blanching, Yun Li immediately strode forward to stop Jian Chen, "Jian Chen! What is the meaning of this!? This is the home of the city lord, for what reason could you have to act as you please here!?"



A cold sneer appeared on Jian Chen's face as he stretched out his arm. With a single swipe, the energy of the world quickly gathered in his palm, and slammed into the ground before Yun Li could react.

A single explosion could be heard as the entire building creaked from the boom. Dust flew into the air and obstructed everyone's vision.

Following a gust of wind that blew away the dust in the air, everyone could see the entire room without trouble. In the ground at the center of the room, there was a pitch-dark hole leading down.

Seeing this entrance, Yun Li's face seemed to be stricken with fear, and his body went slack.

Jian Chen's icy stare made its way to Yun Li before snorting, "Kai Er, Qingfeng, Charcas, Mo Tian. You four go in!"

"Yes!" The four replied before leaping into the cellar below.

Several moments later, the four reappeared from the hole with extremely serious expressions. In Qingfeng's hand was a cubic meter cage where a little cub with golden fur, not even half a meter long, could be seen. From within its cage, the cub's eyes roamed timidly over everyone while it cowered in a corner.

# Chapter 550: Culprit Of Stealing The Young Cub (Two)

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Yun Li's face became extremely white at the sight. Now that things had gotten to where they were, he knew that there was no longer any possible way he could get out of this situation. Even the most perfect lie would be unable to trick them, and Jian Chen was no idiot.

Kai Er and the other three's faces were thunderous as they furiously glared at Yun Li. In their eyes, their rage could not be hidden.

“So, the mysterious assailant that snuck into our Flame Mercenaries to steal away the cub and kill Duo Kang was you! I never would have imagined that the man we had desperately searched for all this time would be you.” Mo Tian snarled as he glared at Yun Li as if he was a bloodthirsty animal that wanted nothing more than to skin his scalp, devour his flesh, and drink his blood.

Practically lifeless where he stood, Yun Li found no words to say. Although he wanted to avoid this subject entirely, Yun Li couldn't find the words to quibble to avoid trouble, especially when he thought about the words he had spoken to Jian Chen earlier before the Class 5 Magical Beast cub came back to bite him.

Jian Chen had been right to say that the culprit would be with the cub. As long as the cub was found, then the culprit would be found as well.

“I never would have imagined that it would be you who stole the Class 5 Magical Beast cub, Yun Li. To think that you were the one that killed Duo Kang, how stupid we were! We should have realized it was you earlier. Throughout Wake City, the person most likely to have a battle skill while also being the biggest unknown to us would be the ruler of the city! How repulsive, how utterly repulsive! We never suspected it was you from the very beginning!” Kai Er was furious as well. His face filled with a furious murderous intent.

Qingfeng looked to Jian Chen, and said to him with indignation, “Captain, now that Duo Kang’s killer has been found, we cannot let him go! Duo Kang would never rest in peace if we did. We cannot let his death go unavenged!”

Qingfeng’s words had caused a fluctuation in Yun Li’s face and a light had begun to twinkle in his eyes.

Nodding, Jian Chen stared straight at Yun Li, “Yun Li, do you have anything to say for yourself?”

Knowing in his heart that there was no way to spin things in a way to justify himself, Yun Li had decided to hide nothing from them. “Correct. The one who infiltrated your Flame Mercenaries that night was me. The one who stole the Class 5 Magical Beast cub was also me, and Duo Kang died by my hands as well. But no matter the case, I, Yun Li, am the the lord of Wake City and an official of the Blue Wind Kingdom. Should you harm an official of the Blue Wind Kingdom, then you will be challenging the authority of the kingdom as enemies! The kingdom as a whole will

not sit idly by the side should you harm me.”

Yun Li’s words made Jian Chen’s eyes twinkle with an icy light, and a sneer appeared on the edge of his lips. Kai Er and the others narrowed their eyes with concern. The Blue Wind Kingdom was a huge beast they had no chance of provoking, so the words of Yun Li had frightened them.

“You value the Blue Wind Kingdom far too much to use them to hide behind in front of me. How ridiculous you are!” Jian Chen laughed with a disdainful expression.

Yun Li started at that. He had thought that Jian Chen would be at least intimidated by the very mention of the Blue Wind Kingdom. The way Jian Chen saw as nothing more than an insect made him feel like there was absolutely nothing he could do to help himself now.

“Jian Chen, does your Flame Mercenaries truly desire to become enemies with the Blue Wind Kingdom!” Yun Li sternly barked. Despite his voice, his heart felt uneasy when Yun Li thought about the fuzzy details of Jian Chen’s background. Jian Chen was truly a mysterious individual in his eyes. At the very least, he knew that Jian Chen was the captain of the Flame Mercenaries, but he lacked every other piece of information about him. Seeing the skill and the atmosphere Jian Chen carried with him, Yun Li had no doubts that Jian Chen was not some sort of savage or uncultured villager.

“The Blue Wind Kingdom? They have no right to stand as an enemy to me. Kai Er, tie up our esteemed lord and escort him out!” Jian Chen commanded.

“Yes!” Hearing their captain utterly reject the Blue Wind Kingdom as something not worth noticing, the four of them stomached their fear and hurried to capture Yun Li per Jian Chen’s orders.

“I’d like to see you try. I am a lord and bureaucrat of the Blue Wind Kingdom!” Yun Li exploded with rage. Unafraid of the group in front of him, his hand took out his sword in preparation to do battle.

“Capture him!” Jian Chen commanded.

Without hesitation, the group took out their own Saint Weapons and began to charge at Yun Li.

A strange light appeared in Yun Li’s eyes. Not running up to fight with Kai Er and the others, his sword flew back to strike the wall, creating a hole. Leaping out of it, he opened his mouth to cry out, “Assassins! The Flame Mercenaries are rebelling! Soldiers, come eliminate them!”

Yun Li’s voice was so great that not only did the soldiers within the mansion hear him, even the soldiers stationed out on the streets could hear his command loud and clear.

Every single soldier from within the mansion immediately mobilized into action. Even the ones outside began to pile in from the streets to join in. Those bystanders outside felt stunned by what they had heard. They immediately began to talk among each

other.

“Did I hear that right? Are the Flame Mercenaries rebelling...?”

“The Flame Mercenaries are the strongest group of mercenaries within Wake City, what reason do they have for a rebellion?”

“I heard that the captain came back last night. Has he gone errant in the head?”

“In the magical beast invasion two years ago, the captain of the Flame Mercenaries was one of the greatest contributors to the city. Why would he rebel?”

Yun Li's words had caused a tremendous explosion of conversations in the streets. No matter if it was a civilian, merchant, or mercenary that heard him, none of them could understand him.

Within a span of several seconds, over three hundred soldiers were jampacked around the area so tightly that even water couldn't escape. Under the protection of several soldiers, Yun Li could be seen coldly smiling at Jian Chen.

Even after being surrounded by these three hundred men, Jian Chen and the other had remained unmoved. Their expression were calm, especially those of Ming Dong, Dugu Feng, Yun Zheng, and Senior An. When they saw the soldiers, they seemed as if they were staring at nothing itself.

“My esteemed lord, it goes without saying that you are childish. Do you really think this small amount of soldiers will be able to force us into submission?” Ming Dong mockingly snorted at Yun Li.

“I do! How could they not? Don’t forget that I have the hundred thousand soldiers of Wake City under my command. Rebels you lot are, rebels I say! From today henceforth, the Blue Wind Kingdom will shelter your Flame Mercenaries no more.” Yun Li knew that there was no way Jian Chen would forgive him, so he had thrown caution to the wind as he committed to this final gambit in the form of the hundred thousand soldiers he had. Killing the soldiers in charge of defending the city was different than killing a civilian or even a merchant. This was tantamount to an act of war against the Blue Wind Kingdom itself and would warrant further punishment.

According to his own thoughts, if the Flame Mercenaries were captured and tried for a sin as grave as rebellion and conspiracy, even the figures behind the mercenaries would be useless.

“Conspiracy and intent to rebel? My esteemed lord, do you take our heads for hats?” Ming Dong merrily laughed. “Do you think this would scare us?”

“Hmph, a group of insurgents that remains unchanging even when death is at hand. Soldiers! Kill them all!” Yun Li barked out a decisive order.

Without hesitation, the three hundred soldiers charged straight at the group in front of them.

Laughing, Ming Dong's body immediately flashed away as an azure light that flew through the crowd and toward Yun Li. Before Yun Li could even react, both of Ming Dong's palms had flown out several times to send the soldiers near Yun Li flying, and with another stretch of his right hand, Ming Dong clasped onto Yun Li's throat.

Ming Dong had been so fast that Yun Li couldn't even see what had just transpired. A choking sensation swelled up within Yun Li's throat as terror flooded his senses once he realized that his throat was held tightly by the enemy.

At the same time, Yun Zheng, Senior An, and Dugu Feng let their Saint Force wrap their palms before they shot, with a wave of energy, at the surrounding soldiers, sending some flying. Plenty of them were knocked so hard that blood flew out from their mouths from the damage they received.

As Earth Saint Masters, there was no need to waste so much energy on these soldiers who were far weaker than them.

Completely terror-stricken, Yun Li could hardly believe his eyes. There was no way he would have imagined that Ming Dong would possess such a tremendous amount of power.

“Brothers, I've captured the lord. What shall we do with him, kill or cripple?” Ming Dong asked Jian Chen.



Yun Li's face paled when he heard Ming Dong, but because of the tight hold on his throat, he couldn't even say anything in response.

"There's no need to deal with him that quickly. Tie him up and carry him out." Jian Chen replied.

"Fine, but let's take some precautions, let's rough him up a bit to make sure he loses his will to fight." With that, Ming Dong slapped his palm into Yun Li's chest.

"Pah!" A mouthful of blood immediately sprayed out of Yun Li's mouth after having been injured by Ming Dong.

Shortly afterward, Kai Er and the others had found some iron chains to tie up Yun Li. His arms were chained behind his back with the chains looping around his neck. Then, under the eyes of all the soldiers there, Yun Li the lord and ruler of Wake City was taken from the mansion without obstruction.

"The Flame Mercenaries have gone rogue and captured the lord. Go, notify commander Duo Li immediately!" One of the soldiers cried out for another to go run for the commander.

Kai Er and the others kept a close watch on the injured Yun Li as they followed Jian Chen from the mansion. The cage with the Class 5 Magical Beast cub had remained with them. Right behind the group, all of the soldiers followed with anxious looks. They had originally planned on blocking Jian Chen from leaving, but when they thought about how terrifying Dugu Feng and the others were,

their fear caused their hearts to tremble, overriding their courage to fight.

# Chapter 551: Citywide Commotion

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Jian Chen, Ming Dong, and the others continued to travel on top of their Class 3 Magical Beast mounts back to the Kai family's compound as if nothing had happened. Right behind them, Kai Er and the other three pushed and prodded the trussed up Yun Li. Now that Yun Li had been heavily injured by Ming Dong and had been tied up in chains, his body was in an extremely weak state. Combined with the fact that the four men around him were as strong as him and the terrifying figures of Ming Dong and Jian Chen in front of him, Yun Li didn't bother to waste any time with trying to break free from his bonds. He knew that it would be impossible to escape.

Jian Chen and the group continued to walk through the streets of Wake City with the lord held captive. On the way, everyone turned to gawk with disbelieving eyes. None of them ever would have thought that the Flame Mercenaries would actually do something like hold the lord of Wake City captive in chains.

"The Flame Mercenaries are conspiring against the Blue Wind Kingdom! They have plans to rebel and turn traitor against the kingdom, do not let them walk free! Take up your weapons and kill the Flame Mercenaries, and you will all be rewarded for your services!" Although Yun Li was chained up, he was more than willing to speak and try to worsen the crimes of Jian Chen, hoping that he could give them all even more trouble.

The eyes of the bystanders nearby the Flame Mercenaries changed in intensity after hearing Yun Li's words. Shortly after they passed, everyone began to talk among with each other, but none of them were stupid. They simply wouldn't believe that the

Flame Mercenaries would rebel against the Blue Wind Kingdom on the words of the lord alone. Combined with the strength of the mercenaries within Wake City, no one dared step into their path to stop them.

Staring disdainfully at Yun Li behind him, Jian Chen prodded, “Lord Yun Li, I respected you two years ago, and thought you to be an honest and upright person. I never would have thought that your true self, hidden deep within, would be so crass, committing the acts of stealing the cub from my Flame Mercenaries and killing a senior figure after being exposed. Your avarice has made me quite mistaken in my judgement. Kai Er, stuff his mouth.”

“Jian Chen, you belligerent savage! I am an official of the Blue Wind Kingdom! How can you treat me this way!? You are challenging the authority of the Blue Wind Kingdom itself; we will never let you li-” At this point, Kai Er stuffed a piece of cloth into his mouth.

Jian Chen’s words had stunned everyone who heard him.

“I’ve heard that the Flame Mercenaries obtained a Class 5 Magical Beast before it was taken by a thief in the middle of the night. I never would have imagined that it was lord Yun Li that stole the beast and killed one of their leaders.”

“Look, isn’t the monster in that cage the Class 5 Magical Beast cub? So, the beast was stolen by lord Yun Li after all.”

“The fact that the Flame Mercenaries had so many of their men

looking for the one who stole it caused a huge uproar back then. The last I heard was that not even a single clue was found, but if it was the lord that stole it, it's no wonder no trace was found."

"Ha, this is most likely some crock-and-bull story from the Flame Mercenaries. The truth of this matter needs to be investigated."

The streets were buzzing with conversation as everyone began to share their perspectives. Some believed that Jian Chen was telling the truth, Yun Li had stolen the cub and killed a senior figure of the mercenaries. Others believed that Jian Chen was making use of an excuse to frame and trap the lord. However, no matter what was said, not a single person moved to stop them. The Defiance Mercenaries had long since left Wake City, and after their departure, everyone knew that the Flame Mercenaries were back as the strongest mercenary group with no equal.

On the Tian Yuan Continent, power was the most important matter for everything. Everything could be solved through power. Things like reason and logic only existed when both sides were equal in strength.

By the time Jian Chen returned to the Kai family compound, news that Yun Li had been captured by them had spread like wildfire through the city. Practically everyone and everything had heard of it in some form. Like a giant bomb that had gone off, everyone was extremely surprised to hear this news.

Wake City was a Third Class city at most, but Yun Li was still its ruler and an official of the kingdom as a whole. If the Flame Mercenaries were so brazen to capture and imprison Yun Li, then

they were directly challenging the authority of the Blue Wind Kingdom, making them an enemy. For the sake of their own honor and prestige, there was no way the Blue Wind Kingdom would ignore this matter.

Back within the inner courtyards of the Kai family, Yun Li was forced to kneel in front of a pillar where the memorial tablet of Duo Kang stood. Outside, plenty of strong-looking men had flowed in one after another. While procuring their equipment for their mission, the men of the Flame Mercenaries had heard about what had happened and dropped everything to return back to the compound. When they heard that it was Yun Li that had stolen the Class 5 Magical Beast cub and killed Duo Kang, their eyes were filled with hatred beyond belief.

Just then, a large concentration of footsteps could be heard outside. Following that, a single guard came running in to report, “Captain! A large group of the city soldiers have gathered.”

Jian Chen lazily waved a hand, “Not to worry — open the doors; let them in!”

Hence, the gates to the Kai family compound were opened wide. A group of armored soldiers could be seen marching toward them in a denomination of over a thousand.

The sounds of their footsteps soon came to a stop, and everyone was keenly aware that they had the entire Kai family compound surrounded.

A single soldier came forward with a small detachment of soldiers following him in. This was commander Duo Li.

Staring at the kneeling Yun Li with hardened eyes, Duo Li turned to look at Jian Chen, “Jian Chen, what is the meaning of this? Why are you treating the lord of the city in such a manner?”

Emotionlessly, Jian Chen replied, “Yun Li stole the Class 5 Magical Beast cub from my Flame Mercenaries and then killed the senior figure Duo Kang. His crimes cannot be forgiven.”

Yun Li spat out the cloth that had been stuffed in his mouth, and mustered all the justice he could, “Duo Li, don’t listen to Jian Chen’s bull! The Flame Mercenaries are planning to rebel against the kingdom; their greed knows no bounds! They have decided to frame me for their schemes.” Seeing how honest Yun Li had looked, Duo Li had no idea whether he was being lied to or not.

“You still dare to quibble!” Kai Er snorted and kicked Yun Li.

Duo Li thought for a moment before replying, “Jian Chen, when Wake City had been under siege by a magical beast invasion, your contributions were widely respected by me, but to treat the lord of the city in such a manner is not acceptable. Release the lord and I will at the very least make the report to the higher ups for justice for the death of one of your own.”

Jian Chen shook his head, “There is no need for such troubles. There is no injustice or hatred I have with Yun Li, for what reason would I have to put false charges on him? Even if I did hate him, I

would not put a such a despicable crime on him if it were false. I have made my decision that he is the assailant without question. Yun Li will be punished in accordance to our Flame Mercenaries.”

Duo Li’s face grew dark as he cupped his hands to Jian Chen, “Jian Chen, although I respect you greatly, the ruler of the city cannot be disgraced in such a manner. If this is how you will continue, then please forgive this one for my offense!” Duo Li waved his hand and commanded, “Everyone, rescue the lord!”

At his command, every single soldier charged into the courtyards. Even the soldiers surrounding the place had flown over the walls to charge at Jian Chen’s group in huge numbers.

With a hearty laugh, Ming Dong held out his azure-colored sword. He said, “Good timing, let me show you the might of my Earth-Tier Battle Skill, Cloud Destroying Cyclone!”

A strong burst of wind attributed Saint Force began to flood from Ming Dong before transforming into a tremendous cyclone that seemed to ascend into the sky where the clouds roamed. Soon, the cyclone spun around so fast that the clouds began to dissipate.

With such a tremendous cyclone appearing in the courtyards, the surrounding walls of the courtyards began to violently shake. Even the soldiers charging at Jian Chen were nearly sucked into it. Unable to keep their balance, it took everything they could to remain attached to the ground. However, the cyclone did nothing to affect Jian Chen’s group.



Seeing the dreadful cyclone appear from nowhere, Duo Li's face blanched as he cried out, "Ear-earth Tier Battle Skill! You're... you're an Earth Saint Master!"

Laughing, Ming Dong gave a violent shake of his sword. The cyclone began to expand even quicker now. It forced the winds to blow even stronger so that the soldiers were pulled into the air without any way of protecting themselves.

At this sight, Duo Li couldn't maintain his stoic expression anymore. This was the very first time he had seen an Earth-Tier Battle Skill. Doing his best to retreat several steps without flying away, Duo Li commanded, "Everyone, retreat! Retreat now!"

Seeing the tornado consume several soldiers, all of the surrounding soldiers who had not yet took part in the charge began to retreat before Duo Li even gave his command. As they tried to flee from the cyclone, their eyes reflected their fear. If they were to be sucked into this cyclone and sent hundreds of meters into the air, chances were that they would die from hitting the ground too hard.

Even Yun Li, who was still kneeling on the ground, turned completely white when he saw the cyclone that reached into the sky. With a rather disheartened murmur, he said, "An Earth-Tier Battle Skill, he has one of those?"

# Chapter 552: Men From Tianlong City

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A tremendous cyclone speared through the sky into the clouds before turning the sky into a surging sea of clouds for all of Wake City to see. The furious waves of wind let out a wailing screech that kicked up dust everywhere within the proximity of the city. Dust covered the sky and sun, forming a dusky sight.

A Heaven-Tier Battle Skill was strong enough to cause the sky to whirl and transform with its might. Although an Earth-Tier Battle Skill was far weaker than a Heaven-Tier Battle Skill, Ming Dong's strength as a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master was strong enough to create such a sight. In front of the eyes of everyone, all of Wake City was treated to a once in a lifetime event.

The gigantic cyclone was noticeable throughout Wake City and caused another big stir among the populace. Many of them were startled by the sudden sight and displayed panicked expressions. Many of them were curious, but far more of them were terrified.

"Everyone, look! Look at how many soldiers are being sent flying by that cyclone..." Fearfully, one of the more sharp-eyed men cried out at the sight above of them.

Whipping their heads up to stare in rapt attention, everyone noticed, that sure enough, plenty of soldiers could be seen whirling about the cyclone without falling back to the ground.

"If I'm not mistaken, those are the soldiers in charge of our city's defenses!"

“What is going on? Why did this cyclone appear, and why is it not moving at all?”

“It’s a battle skill for sure! Dear heavens, this has to be a battle skill, and a high leveled one at that. I heard that when some of the more advanced battle skills are used, they can shake the heavens themselves! Look at this scene, it’s similar to what the rumors say.”

“It has to be an Earth-Tier Battle Skill at the very least, or one of those legendary Heaven-Tier Battle Skills. Since when did our Wake City have one of those...?”

“That’s the area where the Flame Mercenaries entrenched themselves. I heard that they just brought the lord of the city as captive there a small while ago. Now the experts of both sides have to be fighting, but I never expected a battle skill to be used! It has to be a strong battle then, we should take a look! A battle like this is once in a lifetime, it’d be a shame to miss this!”

“Quick, let’s take a look! A fight between experts is rare to come by, we can’t miss this!”

The streets were filled with people as they quickly flew through them headed to the location where the cyclone was originating from. Mercenaries and civilians alike were trying the most to catch sight of a fight that would undoubtedly be unforgettable.

In the courtyards, commander Duo Li and his soldiers were

retreating as far as they could with their faces overwhelmed with shock at the cyclone in front of them.

Kai Er, Qingfeng, Charcas, and Mo Tian were stunned by Ming Dong's technique. They felt a newfound appreciation for him in their hearts. Even in their eyes, their adoration could hardly be concealed.

Half a moment later, Duo Li let out a mouthful of air to try and calm himself, but he could not help but think, "To think that in two years worth of time since the captain of the Flame Mercenaries left, he was able to pull in an Earth Saint Master. With one of those overseeing the group, there would be no faction capable of going against them in Wake City. It would appear that with my strength alone, I will not be able to rescue the lord."

Hesitating, Duo Li yelled in a large voice, "Jian Chen, if there is still room to negotiate, this one hopes you will show some mercy and forgive this simple soldier."

"Ming Dong, cease your hand and don't endanger the lives of these soldiers." Jian Chen commanded Ming Dong.

Ming Dong nodded and slowly began to revoke his Earth-Tier Battle Skill. With Jian Chen's control over the wind elements of the world, he began to slowly ease the flying soldiers back down to the ground. Despite Ming Dong intentionally making his cyclone weak enough to not kill any soldier, they were all still extremely light-headed and blurry-eyed.

“Commander Duo Li, take your men and leave. The matters with Yun Li have no business with you. If you fail to listen, I won’t be as merciless as I was just now!” Jian Chen stated.

Duo Li’s face grew serious when he heard Jian Chen's words, but he said nothing as he cupped his hands together to leave with his soldiers. He now knew that the Flame Mercenaries had an Earth Saint Master with an Earth-Tier Battle Skill, making them far stronger than what any regular Earth Saint Master could accomplish. Thus, Wake City had no way of dealing with the Flame Mercenaries.

With faces ashen from dust and dejection, Duo Li and his soldiers left the courtyards to return to the lord’s mansion. As soon as Duo Li entered his own room, he immediately set his brush to paper and began to write. Finally rolling up his message into a scroll, he attached it to the leg of a Lightning Bird and set it free. As it soared through the air, the Lightning Bird gave a flap of its silver-white wings and transformed into a bolt of lightning that quickly disappeared into the horizon.

The Kai family’s compound had become a mess with part of the walls partly collapsed because of the cyclone. Plenty of the mercenaries, merchants, and civilians, who had gathered around, stood a decent distance away, fearful of taking another step closer. The lord of Wake City was still kneeling on the ground with the memorial tablet of Duo Kang in front of him.

“Look! Isn’t that the lord Yun Li tied up to the pillar? To think that the Flame Mercenaries would treat the lord of a city in such a manner!”

“A mercenary group kidnapping the lord of a city? What a huge story! But this goes to show how strong the Flame Mercenaries are if even the government of the city is helpless to do anything.”

“Wouldn’t the actions of the Flame Mercenaries mean that they’re unafraid of the Blue Wind Kingdom? Although they are strong, they cannot go head-to-head against the entire kingdom.”

“Perhaps the Flame Mercenaries have an even stronger support that doesn’t fear the Blue Wind Kingdom.”

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The crowd outside the Kai family’s compound grew larger and larger as news of what happened spread throughout the city. Soon enough, the Kai family and the Flame Mercenaries grew more and more famous in Wake City. For a mercenary group to kidnap a city lord, this was a huge story for the Blue Wind Kingdom.

“Kai Er, we’ll be putting the trip to the Magical Beast Mountain Range on hold for now. Guard Yun Li and make sure he stays in front of Duo Kang’s memorial table to grieve for seven days. After seven days are over, execute him. Do not let anyone near him in the meanwhile.” Jian Chen ordered.

“Yes, captain!” Everyone replied with respect. With Jian Chen being willing to execute Yun Li for his murder of Duo Kang, everyone within the Flame Mercenaries felt moved. Jian Chen won their love and respect once more.

Four hours later in a First Class city called “Tianlong City,” the lord of the city was reading book when a guard came running in with a letter in his hands. Handing it over, the guard retreated.

Taking the letter and opening it, the lord of Tianlong City began to read. As he read, his face grew darker and darker before slamming the table and standing up in anger. “Ridiculous! How utterly absurd this is! A tiny mercenary group has imprisoned the lord of a city? Where is their common sense? It is truly ridiculous! Men! Call out Katata, Katafei, and Yun Long to me!”

Soon enough, Katata, Katafei, and Yun Long arrived in the study room. Each one of them looked to be around forty years old in age. Cupping his hands together, Katata spoke, “My lord, for you to call us brothers together in such a hurry, what seems to be the matter?”

“It is a ridiculous tale. A small mercenary group has kidnapped the lord of a city; they are taking the officials of the Blue Wind Kingdom to be gnats in their eyes. The three of you will lead a detachment to Wake City with due haste.” The lord spoke with a grim expression. Having a group of mercenaries kidnap and tie up a city lord was utterly intolerable.

“Yes, my lord!” All three of them replied before setting off.

Within the Kai family compound, Jian Chen and Ming Dong had already retired to their rooms to rest. They handed over the rest of the matters to Kai Er and the others to deal with.

“Jian Chen, Yun Li is still a city lord, are you really going to kill him? This is the Blue Wind Kingdom, not the Gesun Kingdom.” Tie Ta asked in concern. Although he knew Jian Chen was a Heaven Saint Master, becoming an enemy of the entire Blue Wind Kingdom was something that was very deadly in the eyes of Tie Ta. With his own strength, there was no way he would be able to defend himself.

Jian Chen chuckled, “Tie Ta, what I’m doing is well within what is acceptable. The Blue Wind Kingdom is nothing to fear. You just need to focus on if we ever lose our path of development!”

“Tie Ta, you need some courage in you! Feel free to watch from the side. Look at us. See how none of us are concerned, so why should you be? You only just started your travels on the Tian Yuan Continent, there’s still plenty for you to learn.” Ming Dong added.

Seeing how relaxed everyone was, Tie Ta couldn’t help but feel slightly less worried, “Oh, fine then. I’ll follow you without a word.”

The next day outside of Wake City, a single group of armored soldiers could be seen flying down the roads at high speeds on their Magical Beast mounts. After being welcomed in by Duo Li and his soldiers, the group began to talk to one another.

After the negotiations were over, the detachment of soldiers immediately moved into Wake City and headed toward the home of the Kai family.



Almost a cup of tea's worth of time later, Kai Er came walking into Jian Chen's room with a grim expression, "Captain, men from Tianlong City have arrived."

"I know. You may leave." Jian Chen's voice could be heard from inside.

# Chapter 553: Meeting An Acquaintance Once More

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“Yes, captain!” Kai Er responded before retreating back into the courtyard. The sight of a large group of soldiers could be seen through the broken down parts of the wall as they slowly neared the compound.

Kai Er, Qingfeng, Mo Tian, and Charcas all stood by the gates with the Flame Mercenaries standing behind them in silent solitude. Each one of them had a grim expression, but there was no worry to be seen.

Not too far away, the disheveled and haggard face of Yun Li had noticed the arrival of the reinforcements from the Blue Wind Kingdom. With eyes that reflected his joy, Yun Li had already begun to think of himself as good as rescued. However, with the cloth still stuck in his mouth, he could not talk; otherwise, he would have long since let out a loud yell.

The five hundred soldiers from Tianlong city came to a stop near the Kai family’s courtyard while three middle-aged men came forward. These three men were Katata, Katafei, and Yun Long who had been ordered by the lord of Tianlong City to go help.

Seeing the tied up figure of Yun Li, Yun Long’s eyes flickered with a furious glint. “How absurd is this group of mercenaries!? To treat the lord of a city in such a manner is unforgivable!”

Katata sighed, “I did not think that the mercenary group that

captured the city lord would in fact be the Flame Mercenaries. That makes this situation quite difficult.” Looking to Yun Long, Katata said, “Brother Yun Long, let us wait a little longer before we reach a conclusion. Two years ago, I happened to meet the captain of the Flame Mercenaries and learned a little about him. He is not as simple as one might think he is. Please allow Katafei and I to handle this and ask what has caused this situation to happen. The captain Jian Chen is not an impulsive and reckless person. If he treats the city lord in such a manner, there is surely a reason for it.”

“Fine, I’ll leave it to you. I hope that the captain is as you say he is.” Yun Long spoke apathetically.

With a smile, Katata leaped off his magical beast mount and strode into the courtyards. Smiling to everyone, he said, “If I might bother everyone, please inform your captain Jian Chen that Katata has come to pay a visit.” Katata did not reveal an angry expression at all, but rather a kindly one as he smiled at everyone.

“Haha, it’s been two years since we last met, Katata. You haven’t changed a bit.” Just as Kai Er was about to respond, a single voice could be heard from behind him as the white-robed Jian Chen came out of his room. Right behind him were Ming Dong, Dugu Feng, Senior An, Yun Zheng, Tie Ta, and You Yue in close succession.

Recognizing Jian Chen, Katata smile and cupped his hands in greeting, “Yes, I haven’t changed at all, but on the other hand, Jian Chen, you’ve changed quite a bit. I barely recognized you just now.” As he spoke, Katata’s eyes swept over the men behind Jian

Chen. Although he couldn't tell the actual level of strength of Jian Chen, Ming Dong, Dugu Feng, Senior An, or Yun Zheng, they all looked to be as powerful as himself. When Katata saw those four, his eyes wavered with confusion.

Katata had no way of confirming just what cycle Ming Dong and the others were at in the Earth Saint Master realm, but he could distinctly tell that they were of the same level of strength as him, Earth Saint Masters!

At this result, Katata was extremely shocked. Two years ago, the Flame Mercenaries weren't nearly strong enough for him to take note of. Aside from Jian Chen, there were no other noticeable figures. However, within a mere two years, four Earth Saint Masters had appeared out of nowhere, that was news of shocking proportions.

"Haha, captain Jian Chen, these four brothers must be your friends!" Katata laughed.

Knowing that Katata was trying to discern the relationship between the four men behind him and himself, Jian Chen smiled. "They are members of my Flame Mercenaries!"

Katata could only grumble to himself in silent pain. If the Flame Mercenaries had four Earth Saint Masters, then his strength had been curbed here. He had originally thought that this would be a simple task, but now that the opposing side possessed such a large strength, Katata felt that he and the others wouldn't be enough for this task.

Katata showed no emotion on his face other than a faint smile, “Captain Jian Chen, I did not expect the Flame Mercenaries to grow so much in two years; I am truly impressed.”

Jian Chen returned the smile. Having no desire to skirt around the issue with Katata, he said, “Katata, you must have come to Wake City for the purpose of saving Yun Li I assume.”

Seeing that Jian Chen had taken the initiative to speak, Katata minced no words either. Thinking for a moment, he nodded his head, “You are correct. We came here to Wake City on behalf of the city lord all the way from Tianlong City.”

Katata’s face grew stern as he continued to speak to Jian Chen, “Jian Chen, I don’t know what issue was started between you and the lord of Wake City, but your treatment of a city lord has made the lord of Tianlong City startled.”

“Some time ago, my Flame Mercenaries managed to obtain a Class 5 Magical Beast, but a mysterious assailant snuck in and stole it one night. That assailant also killed a senior figure of my Flame Mercenaries unfortunately. This mysterious assailant was found out to be the city lord, Yun Li.” Jian Chen stated calmly.

Katata was silent for a moment before saying, “Jian Chen, even if what you say is true, he is still the lord of Wake City and an official of the Blue Wind Kingdom. You cannot treat him in such a manner. Even if there is a crime, you should have let the Blue Wind Kingdom deal with him; why not release him for now?”

Jian Chen shook his head without hesitation, “Katata, I know that you come from Yun Li. But I have made my decision and no one will be able to change my mind. It would be best for you to return.”

“Jian Chen, have you thought about the consequences of your actions if you do this!” Katata spoke.

“What consequences? I care not for them. I, however, am resolute on executing him.” Jian Chen replied.

Seeing how Jian Chen was still unperturbed about the matter, Katata let out a sigh in his mind. This expression of Jian Chen meant that there would be no point in trying to waste words and energy to convince him.

Yun Long strode forward at this moment, “Flame Mercenaries, release the city lord immediately. If not, then you won’t like the future consequences in store.” Yun Long did not bother to negotiate with Jian Chen nor be as gentle as Katata was. Although he knew that there were four Earth Saint Masters here, he did not have any fear for them at all. With the Tianlong City supporting and championing him as a representative of the Blue Wind Kingdom. People as trifling as a mercenary group was thus far beneath his notice.

Yun Long’s words had caused Jian Chen to knit his eyebrows together in irritation. Smiling coldly, Jian Chen said, “What was that? It looks like I’ll just have to see if my Flame Mercenaries will

be able to handle these consequences then.”

Yun Long snorted, “If you wish to die, then don’t blame me. Allow me to experience the ‘might’ of your Flame Mercenaries!” With that, Yun Long materialized a bright-silver sword in his hand as he sent a beam of white light toward Jian Chen. He then transformed into a blurry shadow that shot toward Jian Chen as well.

Seeing the white light, Jian Chen was slightly surprised, “So he is an Earth Saint Master with Radiant Saint Force.”

“But what good is your Radiant Saint Force? Allow me to see what you got.” After Jian Chen spoke, Ming Dong piped up and transformed into a bright ray of azure light that zoomed toward Yun Long.

“Bang!”

When the milky-white light of the Radiant Saint Force came into contact with the azure light of the wind Saint Force, an explosive boom could be heard as ripples of energy surged out like water into the surrounding area. The marbled ground began to fracture once more into a series of spider-web-like cracks.

A single strike later, Ming Dong could be seen standing without a change in expression. On the other hand, Yun Long had been sent staggering back several feet with shock and disbelief on his face as he stared at Ming Dong.

“You’ve reached the Sixth Cycle of being an Earth Saint Master!” Yun Long cried out in disbelief.

His words caused Katata and Katafei to feel shocked as well. A Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master was a paramount existence for all Earth Saint Masters. All they needed was a single step to become a Heaven Saint Master. Such an individual like this was strong enough to be able to fight Katata, Katafei, and Yun Long to a stand still without a problem.

“Wh-what? A Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master? Im-impossible!” Yun Long was dumbfounded. Compared to a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master, a Second Cycle Earth Saint Master was completely insignificant.

Laughing, Ming Dong replied, “And yet you tried to say that our Flame Mercenaries would be unable to handle the consequences with your strength. Hmph, how haughty and arrogant of you.”

Yun Long’s face turned pale-white to pale-green in an unchanging flow of color. Earlier, he had underestimated the Flame Mercenaries. He never would have entertained the thought that the Flame Mercenaries would actually have a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master.



# Chapter 554: Exit

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Standing awkwardly in the courtyard, Yun Long and Katata were now stuck in a rather difficult situation. The strength of the Flame Mercenaries had been beyond their expectations. If they were to use force now, then their side would be hurt the most. At the same time, if they were to retreat, it would be quite shameful and would serve as a slap to their faces.

With a calm voice, Jian Chen turned to speak to Katata, “Katata, you should turn back. This matter with lord Yun Li is something you should not interfere with. My Flame Mercenaries will make no compromises on this matter.” Jian Chen was not at all close with Katata. However, since they had once fought shoulder to shoulder two years ago during the beast invasion wave in Wake City, Jian Chen did not wish to make things too difficult for him, so he had spoke with a softer voice.

Katata sighed and gave a complicated stare to Jian Chen. “Very well then. Jian Chen, if you are so determined to choose this path, then you leave us with no choice. We’ll leave this for today!” With that, Katata pulled the still ashen-faced Yun Long away. They got onto their magical beast mounts, and lead the group of five hundred soldiers back to Tianlong City.

Still kneeling on the ground, Yun Li’s face was despondent and his eyes reflected his despair as he watched Katata and the other two ride away.

Katata, Katafei, and Yun Long had led five hundred soldiers from Tianlong City to Wake City in order to suppress the Flame

Mercenaries. In the end, it was the Flame Mercenaries that had done the suppressing. The mercenaries had forced the group away without achieving their goals. News of this spread across Wake City like fire and caused many of the civilians to begin to reevaluate the Flame Mercenaries.

Without rest, the group from Tianlong City rushed back on their mounts straight to the city lord's mansion in order to report what had happened. Their story of what happened in Wake City was recounted for the lord to hear. The important parts such as there being four Earth Saint Masters with one of them being a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master in the Flame Mercenaries were particularly stressed.

The lord of Tianlong City grew grim after hearing that. Four Earth Saint Masters with one at the pinnacle was an extremely important matter that even the lord had to regard with all due importance.

“How strange that there is such an unknown mercenary group with such a powerful amount of strength. Were you able to find out the background of these people or what power supports them?” The lord asked with concern.

The three shook their heads before Katata said, “My lord, my brother and I once met the captain of the Flame Mercenaries two years ago. At that time, he was only a Great Saint Master, but even then, his fighting strength was simply enough to astound the both of us. When Wake City was in a crisis with the magical beast wave, three Class 5 Magical Beasts came. Shockingly, the three of them were completely killed by the captain! And one of the Class 5

Magical Beast was the Green Scaled Ape!”

Katata’s words were so shocking that even the lord was unable to stop himself from bolting straight up from his chair. Shocked, he questioned, “What was that? The captain of the Flame Mercenaries was able to kill three Class 5 Magical Beasts as a Great Saint Master? Are you sure this is true? Are you lying to me?”

“It is completely true. My brother and I were there to witness it. My lord, the captain of the Flame Mercenaries isn’t a simple person. He cannot be belittled. Even now, he somehow managed to find and bring four Earth Saint Masters into his mercenary group. This is already enough to paint him as a very unique person.” Katata replied in a serious manner. Thinking back to how Jian Chen had killed those three Class 5 Magical Beasts, Katata felt some lingering surprise reappear.

“Since when did such a genius of this aptitude appear within our Blue Wind Kingdom? How strong is the captain of the Flame Mercenaries now?” The lord asked with a grim expression.

“I know not. I wasn’t even able to see his strength.” Katata replied.

The eyes of the lord slid to the other two individuals, “Were either of you two able to see his strength?”

Yun Long and Katafei shook their heads.

The lord's eyebrows furrowed together as he hummed in thought, "He most presumably used some sort of way to hide his strength. From what I gather from you, the captain is a rather mysterious character. I'd like to meet this person and see just what type of person this captain really is. Very well, you may leave first. This should bear no matter with you anymore."

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A week passed by in Wake City. During these seven days, nothing out of the ordinary that happened after Katata, Katafei and Yun Long had visited. Therefore, Jian Chen and his group had lived for a period of peace.

The prestige of the Flame Mercenaries had constantly grown throughout Wake City by the words that came from the mouths of the civilians. Practically everyone within a thousand miles knew about the Flame Mercenaries, which helped give rise to their reputation in the Blue Wind Kingdom.

Within the courtyards of the Kai family, a half meter tall scaffold could be seen. The haggard and disheveled figure of Yun Li could be seen kneeling over the scaffold. Beside him was a strong-looking man with a huge blade towering over him.

Today was the day Yun Li's execution. The entirety of the Flame Mercenaries had gathered here, and even more curious passersby were standing around to point at Yun Li and gossip.

Yun Li displayed a face that was sallow and despondent. His eyes

were completely devoid of life, and his hair was so disheveled that he looked more like a beggar than his known image as the high and lofty lord of a city. His Saint Weapon had long since been destroyed by Jian Chen personally, but his life had been kept intact. As of now, he had already degenerated to a cripple that could not fight. All of the precious Saint Force he had spent years cultivating had been ruined without a chance of returning, and now even escape was impossible.

“Ladies and gentlemen, today I, Kai Er will declare the sins that Yun Li is guilty of...” Kai Er began to recount the tales of Yun Li’s crimes with the Flame Mercenaries for everyone to hear once more. Everyone had already heard the story in clear detail, so Kai Er was merely just saying this as a formality without trying to invoke the reactions of the audience.

Having finished speaking Yun Li’s crimes, Kai Er knew that the time was nigh. He said in a loud voice. “And now is the time. Let the blade fall!” At his order, the man holding the cleaver brought his hands straight up into the air. In front of the thousands of eyes of Wake City, he slashed off the head of Yun Li with a splurt of blood flying from his detached neck. As if offering a sacrifice, the blood of Yun Li splattered on the memorial tablet of Duo Kang.

With Yun Li’s death, Duo Kang’s revenge had been absolved as well. However, there was still a feeling of mourning in everyone’s hearts. No one was happy. Even though Duo Kang’s revenge had been fulfilled, Duo Kang would never return to them. Thus, they would never see him again.

Yun Li’s death had given rise to talk throughout Wake City for

only a moment before dying back down. Although Wake City was now without a lord, the business and everyday life was completely unaffected. It continued as usual. Commander Duo Li was now in charge, and had rarely been seen in the city. Ever since Katata and the others left Wake City, he knew in his heart that even Tianlong city was mindful of the Flame Mercenaries. Hence, he had never bothered to ask about the matters regarding the Flame Mercenaries.

The day after, the members of the Flame Mercenaries followed Kai Er and the other three into the Magical Beast Mountain Range as per Jian Chen's instructions. Everyone left the Kai family's compound, and only a few servants and artisans were left behind to hurriedly repair the place.

Jian Chen had sent Yun Zheng and Senior An with the Flame Mercenaries to protect them while they were training in the Magical Beast Mountain Range. In the case that someone's life was in danger, they would intervene. These men were after all the most loyal of mercenaries, and Jian Chen had no wish to see them come into any danger during their training. With the strength of the Flame Mercenaries revealed, if some Earth Saint Master came to fight with them, Yun Zheng and Senior An would be enough to fight them off or bide time for Jian Chen to arrive.

While the Flame Mercenaries were off training in the Magical Beast Mountain Range, Jian Chen and the others left Wake City as well on top of their Class 3 Magical Beast mounts.

The dark-skinned but straightforward Tie Ta sat on top of his newly confiscated mount. Weighing on his mind was the events of

yesterday's execution of the lord Yun Li.

Having only just begun his journey on the Tian Yuan Continent, Tie Ta had never yet experienced the rules of survival that the Tian Yuan Continent followed. Although he had killed plenty of magical beasts, this was the very first time he seen a person die. Yesterday's sight remained a heavy shock in his mind to the point where he was still perturbed.

Jian Chen understood what Tie Ta was feeling and went to comfort him. "Tie Ta, the Tian Tuan Continent is a world where the weak are the food for the strong. The future will remain like this in almost a daily experience. Wait until you have the strength and you'll learn to adapt."

"The Tian Yuan Continent is a cruel place." Tie Ta muttered.

Jian Chen laughed. "Let's go to Fengyang City. You'll learn plenty over there perhaps."

# Chapter 555: Revealing The Strength Of The White Tiger Cub

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On the way, Jian Chen and the group continued to laugh and chat in peace as they made their way to Fengyang City. They were traveling rather slow. Jian Chen and Ming Dong decided to explain the situation of the Tian Yuan Continent to Tie Ta. You Yue would sometimes interject a word or two of her own, for the sake of helping Tie Ta adjust.

As the princess of a kingdom, You Yue rarely traveled the continent. However, her knowledge was rather vast, and she was more than aware of the rules surrounding the continent and what type of world she lived in.

At that moment, Jian Chen suddenly felt an abnormal sensation. The white tiger cub that had been asleep against to his chest finally woke up. Slowly opening its eyes, the tiger cub shook its head from side to side to observe the surrounding area with curiosity.

Seeing that the tiger cub was finally awake, Jian Chen couldn't help but smile and rub at the cub's scraggly and furry head, "You've finally woken up you hungry rascal."

"Mrowrrrr..." Like it understood what Jian Chen was saying, the cub let out a growl of discontent as if protesting Jian Chen's description of it. Leaping gracefully onto Jian Chen's shoulder, the cub fondly licked at Jian Chen's cheek.

"Jian Chen, where did you get this little cub? I never really



noticed it when it was asleep. Now that it's awake, I can see that it's pretty cute." Ming Dong laughed as he asked. He had indeed noticed the cub before, but he had never paid it any attention until now.

"Back in Mercenary City, I was able to come across this cub in a nearby mountain." Jian Chen smiled without divulging the actual identity of the cub. The less they knew about the cub, the better.

Then, the cub leaped down from Jian Chen's shoulders onto the saddle they were riding on. Sniffing incessantly at the hand that carried the Space Ring, the cub looked up at Jian Chen with a pleading stare.

Knowing just what the tiger cub wanted, Jian Chen couldn't help but force out a laugh, "You hungry rascal. You have already ate everything; there's nothing left." After such a long period of time, the heavenly resources that the Spirit Ape King had given him had run out. As of right now, there was nothing left in Jian Chen's Space Ring.

The intelligent tiger cub understood what Jian Chen said. The bright glint in the tiger cub's eyes began to dim, and its energetic expression became depressed.

Seeing the tiger cub in such a state, Jian Chen grimaced. Holding the cub tightly to comfort it, he said, "Wait until we get to a nearby city. I'll buy you some heavenly resources to eat."

Regaining some spirit in its eyes, the cub gave two growling

sounds in response as if ensuring that Jian Chen would deliver his promise.

What Jian Chen casually said caused everyone to do a doubletake.

“What? Did I hear you right, Jian Chen? You’re going to buy heavenly resources for this little thing? Heavens, that can’t be true!” Ming Dong looked incredulous at Jian Chen, completely unconvinced at what he had heard.

Smiling, Jian Chen replied, “This little one enjoys eating heavenly resources, and will eat plenty of it at a time.”

“That can’t be right Jian Chen! Y-you... you’re actually feeding extremely pricey heavenly resources to this little thing? Ow! Dear heavens, even if you have a lot of money, don’t go throwing it around!” Ming Dong clutched at his head in pain as if experiencing the pains of Jian Chen’s thrifty manner with his money for him.

Seeing the reaction on Ming Dong’s face, Jian Chen could only laugh, but he gave no explanation. The cub understood that Ming Dong was indirectly insulting him, so it leaped onto Jian Chen’s head. Lifting its cute head high into the air, it stared down at Ming Dong. It gave a discontent growl as if it was a king overlooking his subjects.

“Yo-you-you little thing, are you looking down on me?!” Ming Dong was practically on the verge of spitting out blood from his anger because of the fact that a little animal, that wasn’t even half

a meter long, was treating him as a lower life form.

When the normally silent Dugu Feng saw how the tiger cub reacted, an astounded light appeared in his eyes. “What intelligence! This tiger isn’t a regular one.”

You Yue was amused by the antics of the cub and smiled warmly at it with undisguised love and affection. “What an adorable little cub. It looks like it can understand us. Jian Chen, may I hold it?” As she spoke, You Yue was reaching out to hug the cub.

Immediately leaping down from Jian Chen’s head and into his robes, the cub stared vigilantly at You Yue. Aside from Jian Chen, it would not allow any other person to touch it. As an ancient race of a tiger beast, it was naturally proud and unyielding.

“Jian Chen!” You Yue pleaded with Jian Chen. As a female, she loved seeing such a cute animal. Not only was it cute, but it was highly intelligent. Thus, You Yue was attracted by its adorable antics.

Forcing a smile, Jian Chen replied, “I don’t have any choice. I won’t try and force the cub to do something it doesn’t want to.”

“Ai, forget it. If I can’t hug it, then I’ll just watch it from here.” You Yue responded with a crestfallen face.

“Roar!” Suddenly, the tremendous growl of a beast could be heard as a giant black bear came flying toward Jian Chen and the

group.

Now that everyone's attention was on the black bear, Dugu Feng emotionlessly said, "It's only a Class 4 Magical Beast. Let me take care of it."

Before Dugu Feng could even finish speaking, the tiger cub had managed to let out an excited yelp, and flew from Jian Chen's robes as a bolt of white lightning in the direction of the black bear.

Without stopping the cub, Jian Chen laughed, "Let the little cub take care of the Class 4 Magical Beast." As of now, the tiger cub was also at the Class 4 Magical Beast level. Jian Chen himself wished to see just how strong the cub was; since cub was one of the ancient Winged Tiger Gods, Jian Chen was not concerned for its safety.

Staring wide-eyed at the distant tiger cub, Ming Dong cried out, "Dear heavens, how is it so fast!? It's speed is almost on par with my own; Jian Chen, where did you find this cub?" Shocked, Ming Dong could only watch the tremendous speed of the cub in shock.

Dugu Feng and You Yue were equally shocked at the cub with utter disbelief on their faces.

"Don't underestimate the cub. This tiger cub may be small, but it has the strength of a Class 4 Magical Beast as well. However, I can't tell you where I got this cub." Jian Chen chuckled as he stared at the speeding cub.

Speeding off toward the black bear with its tiny body, the cub was able to reach a curiously fast velocity. From afar, the cub looked like a straight white line with a speed that made its body hard to see.

When the opposing black bear saw the cub charge at it with no regards for itself, the bear looked as if its own dignity was being challenged. Growing even angrier, the bear opened its large jaw wide to let out an animalistic roar. Gathering its speed, it charged mercilessly toward the white tiger cub in an attempt to devour it whole.

Suddenly, a pair of wings unfolded from the back of the small cub. With a single shake of its wings, a bright-white blade of wind burst forth, and it shot toward the black bear.

The wind blade was exceedingly fast — far quicker than what the black bear could react against. Finally spearing through the head of the black bear, it bisected the entire body in half without resistance. Without losing any speed, the blade of wind continued off into the distance. It finally disappeared into the bushels of grass, out of sight.

The black bear had been cut in two without even having time to let out a roar before its death. Stopping by the mountainous body of the black bear, the tiger cub let out a content purr and strutted around its body with its short stubby paws as if congratulating itself on flawlessly killing such a large black bear.

By now, Jian Chen and the rest of the group had arrived on the backs of their Class 3 Magical Beast mounts. However, after they

looked at the bisected corpse of the black bear, they now scanned the tiger cub with a new light. Not a single one of them would underestimate the cub now. If a Class 4 Magical Beast was killed with such ease, that meant the cub was at the very least equivalent to an Earth Saint Master in strength.

Leaping up into the air, the cub began to purr excitedly on Jian Chen's shoulder as if extremely proud of its own achievement.

Letting out a sigh, Jian Chen recollected himself. Watching the tiger cub kill a Class 4 Magical Beast so easily had really astounded him. The tiger cub had never been in a battle before, so even though it had its strength boosted to the Class 4 Magical Beast level with heavenly resources, it was still in its adolescent phase. It was not quite yet fully grown.

If a child possessed such a tremendous amount of power like this, its battle strength would be ridiculously terrifying when it fully matured as an adult!

# Chapter 556: Arriving At Fengyang City

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The amount of power that the small tiger cub had revealed was simply astounding. Ming Dong, Dugu Feng, and You Yue could only stare dumbfounded at the cub. Not a single one of them had expected to see a tiger, roughly the size of a small cat, contain so much power. Enough power that it was able to kill a Class 4 Magical Beast as easily as blowing off dust. A sight like this was simply too much to take in, so everyone found it rather hard to believe.

“Jian Chen! T-th-this tiger cub, why is it so strong?” Ming Dong’s eyes were glued to the corpse of the black bear as he stuttered.

Jian Chen laughed, “I’ve told you before. Don’t underestimate the little cub, its strength is far beyond what you can imagine.”

Staring at the little cub with eyes that contained a little fear, but a renewed amount of adoration. You Yue said, “How strange to see it be so strong. If I didn’t see it for myself, I would never have believed that a cub this small would be able to easily kill a Class 4 Magical Beast. Jian Chen, what’s its name, and what does it normally like to eat?”

Taking the cub from his shoulder and hugging it to his chest, Jian Chen leisurely scratched at its head. The tiger cub did not resistance Jian Chen’s actions, and instead closed its eyes bliss, quietly enjoying the sensations.

“I don’t know what its name is either. I’ve always called it the

little white tiger. What's its favorite food? Hm, it likes to eat any heavenly resources. It also likes roast meat as well." Jian Chen chuckled. The princess seemed as if she was planning to use food to get the cub to like her.

"Heavenly resources and roasted meat, wait until we get to the city, I'll find some there." The princess eagerly replied. She began to anxiously await their arrival at the city.

"Ah, then. If the cub doesn't have a name, why not give it one? Constantly calling it tiger cub or little white tiger can be tiring to hear." You Yue stared expectantly at Jian Chen.

Jian Chen had felt that this was a rather reasonable suggestion and nodded. "Very well then, but what name shall I give it?"

You Yue was quiet for a moment, "The cub has a pair of wings on its back, that much cannot be ignored. Even with its small body, it is extremely brave like a god. Yes, we should give it a name like that." You Yue's eyes sparkled, "I have it! We should call him the Winged Tiger God! It's is not only a powerful name, but it fits the tiger's full might. If it can kill a Class 4 Magical Beast with ease, then being a tiger god would be apt."

Jian Chen couldn't help but feel startled at the name You Yue picked. On a whim, she had managed to guess the actual name of the race of the tiger. This was the identity of the tiger. Even if very few people knew the backstory of the Winged Tiger God, there would most likely be trouble in the case that news of one made its way to one of the hidden experts in the world.



“No-no-no, I refuse. That name isn’t good to hear, let’s change it.” Jian Chen hurriedly shot down You Yue’s suggestion. No matter what, the name the Winged Tiger God could definitely not be used. Right now, Jian Chen was doing his best to hide the identity of the tiger cub. He was afraid that if news were to reach the Gilligan clan, then things would be disastrous. Although You Yue had only given this name on a single whim, this name was no ordinary name. It determined whether a life would be saved or destroyed.

“I thought the name was pleasant to the ears, why not?” You Yue was confused about Jian Chen adamant refusal. It was only a name, there was no need to react as Jian Chen did.

“It’s not a nice name. Let me choose, we should call it Xiao Bai from now on.” Jian Chen hurriedly replied.

Unable to laugh nor cry, You Yue stared at Jian Chen, “Xiao Bai!? That name is far too simple. It doesn’t show how strong the cub is at all. It sounds even worse than mine!”

“I don’t feel that it’s a bad name. The cub has fur as white as snow and is small. Xiao Bai suits it rather well.” Jian Chen looked at the cub in his robes and asked, “From now on I’ll be calling you Xiao Bai, do you like that name?”

“Mrrowrrr~~” The cub nodded its head in excitement and stamped its short four paws against Jian Chen’s chest repeatedly as if it favored the name.

Somewhat satisfied, Jian Chen glanced at You Yue, “Look, Xiao Bai likes that name.”

The road forward was long and slow. They would often spend their time traveling without seeing anyone else, but sometimes, several groups of merchants or mercenaries crossed their path. However, Jian Chen and the group continued on their mounts without stopping. They headed to Fengyang City chatting and laughing the entire way.

Although the group was short Yun Zheng and Senior An, it did not impact them much. Jian Chen had wanted the Flame Mercenaries to leave Wake City for the Magical Beast Mountain Range, so he had the two protect them in secret. Otherwise, he would never feel at ease.

The group was currently holding onto the Human-Tier and Earth-Tier Battle Skills. Furthermore, Kai Er was still holding onto the Golden Fur Tiger King’s cub to raise with the other three.

In the past, it was because of the Golden Fur Tiger King that the Flame Mercenaries were almost wiped out. So for the past few days before his departure, Jian Chen had been vexed on whether to execute the beast or not. He had planned on it at first, but when he thought back to how the cub was like a very young child that did not know the ways of the world, especially during the time when the Flame Mercenaries were killed, he reluctantly decided to spare it.

Although some blame still had to be assigned to the greed of the group. If the group had not sought out the cub, then they would not have incurred the wrath of its mother and fallen to such a disastrous position.

The senior figure Duo Kang had been killed because of the Golden Fur Tiger King's cub as well. However, the Flame Mercenaries had exhausted far too much sweat and blood for it now. If he were to execute the beast, then the Flame Mercenaries efforts would have amounted to nothing. Therefore, Jian Chen gave it even more thought and decided that Kai Er would be given the cub to tame. It would also serve as compensation and proof that their efforts were not in vain.

Fengyang City was roughly one thousand five hundred kilometers away from Wake City, and with Jian Chen's groups slow speed, it would take an entire day and a half to reach the city.

Fengyang City was a Second Class city and was consequently far more accomplished and fancy-looking than Wake City by far. As they approached, large groups of travelers could be seen on the main roads walking to and fro. As far as the eye could see, merchants and mercenaries could be seen sharing the roads.

At the gates, several soldiers could be seen standing in a line. They were there to make sure every single merchant paid an entrance toll before entry. After paying that entrance toll, entry to the city would be given without trouble. Otherwise, there would be a forceful inspection of the goods being brought in.

Slowly, Jian Chen and his group drew closer and closer to

Fengyang City. Unlike Wake City, Fengyang city would rarely see Class 3 Magical Beast mounts instead of never. Some of the stronger mercenaries would even use those mounts, so not much attention was given to Jian Chen's group.

The soldiers of Fengyang City were the type who loved to bully, but couldn't stand to be bullied in return. Knowing that anyone who rode such beasts would not be of ordinary stature, the soldiers didn't dare trouble them. Hence, Jian Chen's group was easily able to enter the city without any hindrance.

Entering the city, Jian Chen looked around the place with observing eyes. In his mind, the visions of the past events that happened in this city appeared in his mind like an animation.

Two years had already passed since his last visit, but Jian Chen was still able to remember the events that happened. In the past, he had brought two Class 5 Magical Beast carcasses into the auction house, causing a stir. The greedy hearts of the families and clans caused them to try to steal the carcasses from him. It was only after a valiant effort that he was able to escape, but an Earth Saint Master had managed to chase after him and force him down a cliff.

Arriving at a rather decent inn within the city, Jian Chen had everyone book a room and tidy up their affairs. After all that was done he turned to Dugu Feng, "Dugu Feng, there is a Heavenly Phoenix Auction House within this city. Take these two Class 5 Monster Cores and auction them off. Remember not to reveal your strength. However you wish to do it is up to you."

"Jian Chen, you're not exactly short on money, why are you

auctioning off two Class 5 Monster Cores?” Ming Dong asked in confusion. Even Dugu Feng and You Yue were rather confused by the actions of Jian Chen.

Jian Chen gave a secretive smile, “I have my reasons for what I do. Don’t ask for now, it’ll become apparent to you soon enough.”

“Very well, I know what to do!” Dugu Feng replied as he took the two monster cores from Jian Chen.

“One more thing. Don’t let the auctioneers learn of our identities. I know you are capable of this. It shouldn’t be difficult for you at all.” Jian Chen complimented.

Dugu Feng gave a nod of his head, “Understood!” With that, Dugu Feng left the inn with the monster cores.

After Dugu Feng left, Jian Chen decided not to stay in their rooms. “Let’s go eat something. Then we’ll go on a walk to see if there are any heavenly resources available.”

# Chapter 557: Conflict

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Jian Chen and the others walked downstairs. The inn was serving plenty of local delicacies, so they decided to sit down at a table to eat. Although there were no heavenly resources for the tiger cub to eat, the smell of the food was extremely delectable. Seated right next to Jian Chen, the tiger devoured a platter of roasted meat — much to the curiosity of everyone else around them.

“Xiao Bai, come eat this! It’s delicious!” The delicate and jade-like hand of You Yue lifted a piece of roasted meat toward the cub as if to coax it. Her limpid eyes stared unwaveringly at the cub with an expression of love that was all too noticeable.

The cub didn’t even bother to look up as it continued to eat the platter of food in front him with gusto. The rate at which the food was devoured was almost as if the tiger cub had been starved for several days.

With the cub completely ignoring her, the princess let out a depressed sigh. She propped her chin on her left hand as she stared at the hungry tiger with worry.

“Jian Chen, just what in the world did you do to capture Xiao Bai’s heart? Why is it so attached to you while it ignores me completely? What do I have to do in order to get Xiao Bai to accept me?” You Yue pleaded with Jian Chen.

Shaking his head with a small smile, Jian Chen replied, “I really

don't know either. However, if you like Xiao Bai so much, then I can only assume that after some time, Xiao Bai will slowly come to accept you."

By now, the cub had completely finished the platter. With eyes that were as equally as pitiful as You Yue's eyes, the cub stared at Jian Chen as if it wanted more.

Laughing, Jian Chen scratched at the cub's head gently. "Waiter, another platter of five spice roast meat. Make it a big platter!"

"Got it!" Came the enthusiastic response of the waiter who quickly reappeared with another platter of meat for the cub. With the aroma of the scent being so deliciously tempting, the tiger cub could resist no longer and began to eat the meat.

"Waiter, prepare your biggest private room! The second master of the Heiming clan will be dining with the third lady from the Yun family!" Suddenly, a resonating cry could be heard from outside the inn as a single middle-aged man came striding in with a voice that demanded respect.

"Ye-yes! I will prepare a room right away!" The Heiming clan and the Yun family were both very well known names in Fengyang City, so the waiter immediately dropped his other tasks and went off to prepare a room.

After the waiter retreated, the soldier turned around. He gave a smile to the people outside the door. "Second lord, third lady, if you would please!" A twenty something year old male with a

haughty face could be seen walking in. He was dressed in white robes to give off a handsome look. His eyes swept across the inn with an expression that hinted everyone else was beneath him.

Right by his side was a pink-skirt wearing young woman. Refined and quiet, her age was slightly younger than him — around eighteen — but she was exceedingly beautiful. With skin as white as cotton, her jet-black eyes would sometimes flash with light of intelligence.

“Yun Lian, let us head upstairs!” The handsome man beckoned to the young woman with a gentle voice. His eyes hid nothing but admiration for the woman.

Giving a gentle word of agreement, the woman prepared to follow the man upstairs. Within her bright and intelligent eyes, a nearly imperceivable glint of boredom and helplessness could be seen.

As the group walked by Jian Chen’s table, the sight of the tiger cub eating the roasted meat on the table had suddenly caught the young woman’s eye. She couldn’t help but exclaim, “What an adorable little animal!”

The surprised cry of the woman caused the man she was with to suddenly turn around. Looking at the tiger cub in question, he smiled, “This little thing is indeed quite cute. Yun Lian, it’ll be your birthday in three days, why don’t I gift you this pet as your birthday present? Would you like that?” The man was exceedingly arrogant; without even consulting the owner for negotiations, the man had already assumed that the pet was his own personal



property.

In his eyes, everyone that was eating within the common area of the inn were men with no status. Only those who ordered their own personal rooms were of status. So taking a little pet from these people would be an easy task. He could simply drop a few purple coins for them to enjoy and everyone would be happy.

The words of this youth made Jian Chen's group narrow their eyes.

"Xiao Bai belongs to us. We did not even consent. Why do you think we would give him to you?" Tie Ta sharply responded. The way this youth talked made Tie Ta feel quite unforgiving toward him.

Tie Ta's words caused the young man's face to darken as the glint in his eyes grew nefarious. A smile that didn't quite reach his eyes could be seen on his face. "I can see that this little pet of yours is worth some money. It seems to happen that I am a young man with plenty of wealth. Are you afraid that I won't pay you? Speak your price and we can be on our way."

As he spoke, the young man's eyes quickly swept over the people at the table with eyes full of disdain. Although the clothes they wore weren't that bad, they just weren't even of any defensive value, which meant they wear no one of importance.

However, the young man's eyes flew wide open when they landed upon You Yue. Dazed at the penultimate beauty that was

You Yue, he did not speak for a long while.

Beautiful! Truly too beautiful! She was a beauty that would leave any male breathless where he stood. He could swear that since his birth, he had never seen a single woman as beautiful as she was. Even the princess of the Blue Wind Kingdom didn't possess a beauty as great as hers.

The sudden loss of composure from the man had caught the attention of the young woman next to him. She discovered You Yue's existence at that point as well. When she saw the fairy-like beauty of You Yue's face, she too was stunned. However, there was some envy aside from her shock.

She took pride in being the absolute beauty of Fengyang City. Even in the entire Blue Wind Kingdom, there were very few women that could outrank her in beauty. With the arrival of princess You Yue, no matter how much faith she had in herself, she would definitely have to step down.

The light in her eyes flashed brilliantly and clearly as if they could see through the darkness within a person. Carefully studying the group, she began to observe their calm nature before growing pensive.

Quickly realizing where he was, the man didn't even notice the look on the woman with him. He continued to stare at You Yue. Feigning to be a man of honor, he cupped his hands in salute, "This one is the second master of the Heiming Clan in Fengyang City. If I might ask for the name of this beautiful lady. Oh, it is truly a disgrace for such a beautiful woman to be sitting in such an area to

eat. This one has already ordered a private room upstairs with plenty of delicious and exotic food. If this beautiful lady might feel so inclined to do me the honor, please come upstairs with us to wine and dine,”

Before Jian Chen could even speak, Ming Dong responded. Slamming his hand on the table with anger, he growled, “You’re being gutsy kid. You’re asking for trouble by trying to flirt with the fiancée of my brother here.”

Hearing herself referred to as Jian Chen’s fiancée, You Yue couldn’t help but blush and feel bashful. When her eyes moved to Jian Chen and saw that he was as calm as ever, her heart couldn’t help but feel disappointed.

Ming Dong’s words had caused the entire inn to grow silent. Even a crow or peacock would refuse to make a sound in this tense environment. Pausing mid-speech in their conversations, every diner in the inn stared at the table where Ming Dong was. Many of them sighed to themselves when they realized the situation. Within Fengyang City, no one could handle the consequences of fighting the Heiming clan.

The young man’s face hardened with fury. As the second master of the Heiming clan, his status was majestically high. Standing within this inn and being scolded by such an insignificant person was an unbearable shame to him.

“Men! Come and take away this sharp-tongued fool. Then carve out his tongue!” The man barked out for his soldiers to hear.

“Yes, second master!” Several doughty guards spoke in quick succession before moving to grab Ming Dong.

“Come and die then!” Ming Dong’s eyes coldly flashed. His right hand shot forth with a burst of Saint Force. It flew forward and struck the nearby soldiers, causing them to fly away with blood coming from their mouths.

Ming Dong’s actions stunned the entire inn into silence. Their opinion of Ming Dong drastically changed after this display, and no one dared to belittle him now.

The young man was wide-eyed at this display of strength as well. He didn’t think that the strong guards he brought with him would be so easily thrown back. A strength like that was quite unbelievable.

The man had not been cowed just yet. Barking at Ming Dong, he yelled, “You dare strike at my Heiming clan! Aren’t you the one asking for trouble?”

Sneering, Ming Dong replied, “You’re the one seeking trouble. Go ahead and get lost!” Ming Dong pulled at the robes of the man and threw him mercilessly through the window and into the streets. Ming Dong’s strength had been so massive that the man tumbled across the ground with enough force to shatter the marble beneath him.

With a miserable scream, the young man’s face grew deathly

pale, but he did not crawl up from his position. After being tossed by Ming Dong, his entire body had been broken in several places.

The people in the streets quickly began to talk in a large hubbub as they pointed at the young man. When they realized just who the youth was, their mouths instantly snapped shut. They spoke no more. Despite this, some of them looked gleefully at the miserable state of the man.

Under the stares of the crowd, the young man's anger reached a boiling point. Glaring angrily at Ming Dong, he growled beneath his breath, "Just you wait. I'll definitely remember this!" The affairs that happened today would become an unwashable shame that he would never be rid of. This was the biggest humiliation that he had ever experienced within Fengyang City.

## Chapter 558: Draconix Wood

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Jian Chen and the others no longer felt in the mood to eat after such an event. Throwing down a purple coin, they left the inn.

The woman stood still without a word as she stared at the retreating figures with a light that betrayed nothing of her thoughts.

After Jian Chen's group left the inn, they began to stroll around Fengyang City. This was the very first time Tie Ta had ever been in such a luxurious-looking city. As they walked, his head swiveled back and forth. He took in all the sights while curiosity filled him. Not a single sound could be heard from his mouth, and in that moment, he was the epitome of a villager visiting the city for the first time ever.

Plenty of people on the streets found themselves turning their heads to look at You Yue because of her stunning beauty. Plenty of surprised whispers could be heard, and many mercenaries made less-than-discreet eyes at her. There had been several young masters, who thought themselves to be quite handsome, that tried to come up and court You Yue. Each and every one of them had been kicked back by Ming Dong. In the end, Tie Ta couldn't handle it anymore and took it upon himself to protect the princess as well.

You Yue had long since been immune to the gaze of the common populace, but with so many of them being so annoying, she gave up and bought a cloak from a nearby shop. It covered her face so that there would be fewer problems.

Unbeknown to them, four hours had passed since the start of their saunter. They had attempted to buy heavenly resources from any store that would sell them. However, none of the rare ingredients sold by the stores they visited were over a hundred years old. The very sparse few that were were still not old enough to be of any assistance to the tiger cub. Their price tags had been overwhelming as well, so Jian Chen continued on empty-handed after visiting several stores.

“Let us go to the free market then.” Jian Chen made a proposal before heading in a certain direction with the tiger cub and the others.

Casting an eye behind them, Ming Dong’s eyebrows furrowed together with an impatient look, “Jian Chen, shouldn’t we get rid of those annoying gnats behind us?”

“Forget about them. If they want to follow us, we’ll let them.” Jian Chen replied without even looking back.

At that moment, a drumming sound could be heard from the front as a group of red-robed men came striding through the city with a huge clamor. The scene looked like a wedding procession with the festive celebration, but the contents of their words caused everyone on the streets to feel stunned.

“Good news everyone! Our Heavenly Phoenix Auction House will be auctioning off two Class 5 Monster Cores seven days from now...” The man leading the group was speaking through a giant, gold horn with a blast of sound that could be heard in all directions.

“What? The Heavenly Phoenix Auction House has Class 5 Monster Cores to sell, is that true?”

“Heavens, more have appeared? And there’s two of them at the same time, did I hear that right...?”

“If the auction is going to be selling one of those, we must go and inform the lord...”

The news shocked everyone. A Class 5 Monster Core was a very rare thing to come across anywhere other than a First Class city. With the Second Class Fengyang City coming across two of them at once to sell, it was far too much to take in. One core was one thing, but two cores were another.

Everyone had begun to react in varying manners to this bombshell of information. Some of the mercenaries and merchants began to buzz with words while the men with powerful backgrounds retreated to their respective families. They reported the matter to the head of their family.

Jian Chen smiled when he heard the news. “The Heavenly Phoenix Auction House works quite fast. In such a short amount of time, they already created a huge uproar. Though, two Class 5 Monster Cores appearing out of nowhere should create such an attraction.”

The fact that there were two Class 5 Monster Cores being auctioned off by the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House bore no



influence on Jian Chen's group; hence, they continued to travel on their way to the free market.

The free market of Fengyang City was exceedingly large. All sorts of peddlers selling all sorts of things could be found here. There were plenty of buildings constructed all over the overflowing streets, making it hard to walk from one place to another.

Jian Chen and the rest continued to visit each and every store that sold heavenly ingredients and heavenly resources in order to find any heavenly resources that were at least a thousand years old. After two hours of walking, they were still empty-handed. A heavenly resource over the age of three hundred wasn't even found, let alone one a thousand years old. Only a few stalks of hundred year old ginseng were uncovered, but they had exorbitantly high prices. The more important thing was that a ginseng of that age would no longer serve any purpose to the Class 4 Magical Beast tiger cub, and would be the same as being fed some bok choy.

"Master! I've discovered some Draconix Wood, that is one of the materials that can be used to forge the hilt of the Azulet Sword. Hurry and buy it!" Suddenly, Ziyang's voice could be heard in Jian Chen's mind.

Jian Chen faltered for a moment as a smile overcame his face. Hurriedly he asked Ziyang, "Where is it?" As soon as he asked, a strange sensation flooded his mind. At this moment, there was a strange connection between his spirit and a peculiar but mysterious object that brought his eyes to a nearby building.

Without hesitation, Jian Chen walked into the building at a brisk pace.

“Hey, Jian Chen! Where are you going? Wait for us.” Ming Dong called out from behind before the other three ran after him.

This was a store that specialized in selling wooden sculptures. Inside were plenty of precious wood carvings and other wooden arrangements of considerable value. Some of the more powerful families would sometimes come and buy some for their own homes.

When they entered the store, a young shopkeeper was immediately visible with a welcoming smile on his face, “My lords, welcome to the most exquisite wood carvings within Fengyang City. All of the items here are carved by the master sculptor Mu Chexuan, whose skill is among the best in the city! I guarantee my lord’s satisfaction here with whatever the item.”

Ignoring the shopkeeper, Jian Chen’s feet carried him straight to the second floor.

However, just before Jian Chen could enter it, the shopkeeper hurried to stop him with an apologetic but courteous smile. “My lord, this one is truly sorry, but the second floor is only accessible to those guests with a purple card. If my lord wishes to view our wares there, then please show me a purple card!”

With a twist of his hand, a purple card appeared in Jian Chen’s right hand, “Do I have the right to go up now?”

Seeing the purple card, the smile on the man's face rekindled. Hurriedly nodding, he said, "Welcome my lord. Welcome. If I offended you with my actions earlier, please forgive me. Allow me to welcome you to the second floor."

On the second floor, Jian Chen ignored all else and simply stared straight at a giant log seated in the very center of the room.

The entire thing was a dark-red with golden light running throughout it. With a diameter of a third of a meter and a height of one meter, the block of wood looked as if it once used to be the trunk of a tree. With the tree trunk twisted and distorted in a strange pattern of grains, the sight of a "dragon" and "phoenix" could just barely be seen carved into it in a lifelike manner.

Looking at the dragon and phoenix pattern on the wood, Jian Chen's eyes flashed with light. He could distinctly tell that the pattern contained the essence of the world that was particular hard to fathom and extremely profound in nature. It was almost identical to a Saint Tier Battle Skill, and seemed to just contain every part of the world within its secrets.

"My lords, might I welcome you to our Thousand Hand Workshop where we display the finest of sculptures and carvings. Is there something my lords find of interest?" An elderly man approached them with a smile as he spoke in a friendly manner.

Surveying the area with confusion, Ming Dong could only ask Jian Chen, "Jian Chen, what are you doing in a place like this? The

sculptures here might be nice to look at, but you don't have any interest in stuff like this, do you!?"

Completely disregarding Ming Dong's question, Jian Chen slowly walked to the dark-red log of wood, and stared at the dragon and phoenix carving. "Shopkeeper, where did you get this block of wood?"

The old man laughed, "What an eye my lord has. This magical piece of wood is the treasure of our Thousand Hand Workshop. It's rumored that it was taken from one of the wild zones of the Tian Yuan Continent — the Sea of Yangfire. It is there that this piece of wood was baptized by the strongest of flames and became as hard as steel. Flames cannot burn it, and steel cannot break it. This is truly a treasure among treasures."

"Just how much are you exaggerating? An item brought back from one of the wild zones of the continent would indeed be an item in great demand, but would one really end up in a Second Class city? Do you take us to be three year old children that are easy to bully?" Ming Dong snorted.

"Haha, this rotten old man knows that my lords will not believe me. Even if you believe me or not, this piece of magical wood is truly worth what it is as a treasure. That cannot be changed." The elder laughed without being insulted.

Jian Chen's eyes slowly moved away from the block of wood as he tried to restrain the surging emotions he felt within him. With a calm voice, he asked, "How much for this wood? Name your price."

Seeing that Jian Chen was interested, the shopkeeper's eyes lit up. Hurriedly, he said, "What an eye my lord has, this old man greatly admires such an eye. Since this wood is quite unnatural as well as being the treasured jewel of this store, the price will be quite high." The shopkeeper didn't say a price and instead held up three fingers.

With wide eyes, Ming Dong said, "Don't tell me you're selling it for three hundred purple coins. That's a huge price for a single block of wood."

The shopkeeper shook his head. "My lords, if you take a look at this piece of wood, the naturally formed pattern on it is beyond what man can do. With that alone, a price of three hundred purple coins is not enough to buy it."

"Then are you selling it for three thousand purple coins?" Tie Ta spoke with a look of disbelief on his face.

The shopkeeper shook his head, "Incorrect, thirty thousand purple coins!"

"What! Thirty thousand purple coins?!" Ming Dong cried out. A price like that made him leap up into the air in shock. Swearing out loud, he spat, "You might as well rob me of my money! A single block of wood costing thirty thousand purple coins? Three hundred purple coins was already beyond what I was willing to spend. But this price? Who'd ever buy it?"

A smile appeared on Jian Chen's face, 'If this piece of wood is indeed that price, then shopkeeper, I would like to purchase it.' From the mouth of Ziying, Jian Chen had learned that this Draconix Wood was one of the materials used to forge the Azulet Swords. Materials like these were extremely rare in nature and priceless beyond all else. For something like this to be for thirty thousand purple coins, Jian Chen only saw it as a delectable deal.

Whether it was thirty thousand, three hundred thousand, or three million purple coins, Jian Chen would purchase this without hesitation. The moment he knew an item was one of the materials for the Azulet Sword, he would buy it.

# Chapter 559: Prosperous Auction (One)

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Realizing that Jian Chen was prepared to pay thirty thousand purple coins to buy the piece of wood, the shopkeeper was sent into a daze. In the scope of Fengyang City, very few people could shell out such a sum for something like this; anyone who could would never use it to purchase a piece of wood that would only serve as a piece of decoration in their homes. At the very least, this piece of wood had lain within the store for many years, and had attracted the eyes of just as many people. However, when they heard the price, every single person had been intimidated by it and retreated.

Thirty thousand purple coins was not a small sum by any means. A sum like this could raise the status of an entire clan as well as their power by a tremendous amount. Using so much money to pay for a useless block of wood was of no use to those clans.

In disbelief, the shopkeeper looked at Jian Chen before asking with a quavering voice, “My lord, do you really wish to purchase this block of wood? It costs thirty thousand purple coins!” The shopkeeper was afraid that Jian Chen had heard wrong and made sure that he stressed the price again.

Taking out a purple card from his Space Ring, Jian Chen said, “Here is my payment. Take this. From now on, this block of wood is mine.”

The shopkeeper’s eyes remained glued to the Space Ring Jian Chen had used to take the purple card from in wide-open shock. “Sp-space Ring!” He cried out in shock. The light he saw Jian Chen

from was completely different than before. A Space Ring was an extremely precious storage item that was far better than a Space Belt, and it was also far more rare than one. Only the strongest and most illustrious figures would have the right to wear an accessory like that. At least in Fengyang City, only a meager four people were able to wear a Space Ring. Each one of these people were extremely important and influential — the first was the lord of Fengyang City, and the other three were the lords of their own clans.

Before, the shopkeeper had only thought Jian Chen to be a young master of the city with plenty of wealth to spare. When he saw the Space Ring on Jian Chen's finger, that thought had been thrown out the window. From this ring, the shopkeeper could guess that this was not a youth he had seen before. This youth held an identity that was far beyond what he could possibly imagine.

A Space Ring was far more reliable way to establish one's identity than a purple card. A person who possessed a Space Ring was a person that could not be looked down on.

In a single moment, the shopkeeper's treatment of these shoppers changed to an extremely respectful manner. Smiling wide, his face reflected the ideal shopkeeper's face when talking to a customer.

The thirty thousand purple coins were quickly traded to the shop. Handing the card back to Jian Chen, the old man smiled, "Esteemed lord, here is your card. This piece of wood is yours now."

Receiving the purple card emotionlessly, Jian Chen took the



block of wood and stored it in his Space Ring along with the card.

“Jian Chen... you-you really bought a piece of wood for thirty thousand purple coins!?” Tie Ta stared at him in shock. His heart felt as if it was about to collapse on itself. Thirty thousand purple coins was a tremendous amount of wealth; and Jian Chen had used it to purchase a block of wood!

The materials he had for the Azulet Swords had increased by one more with the Draconix Wood in hand. Knowing that he was one step closer to the swords, Jian Chen was elated. “This piece of wood is something I desperately need; its value to me is beyond what you could imagine!” He smiled. Jian Chen hadn’t bothered to hide the fact that the Draconix Wood was beyond ordinary since it was as good as safe in his hands. There was no need to fear anyone that had their eyes on it now.

“Esteemed lord, this old man recognizes that you are a knowledgeable person and you seem to know the history behind this piece of wood. I am quite curious of its nature now, would it be possible for my lord to explain to this old man a thing or two about its uses? I would like to further my realm of knowledge.” The man inquired with a pleading tone.

Laughing, Jian Chen replied, “Shopkeeper, did you not say before that this piece of wood was retrieved from a wild zone? You already know then. What use is there to ask more?”

“That... I... I...” The shopkeeper sputtered. When he had said that the wood was from a mysterious place, it had been a fabrication he knew nothing of. It was only meant to raise the

mystique and price of the wood. What he didn't expect was that he would meet someone more knowledgeable about it than him.

With a hollow laugh, the man hurriedly changed the subject, "Esteemed lord, there are still many more excellent sculptures within our Thousand Hand Workshop. Why not take a walk around and peruse them? Perhaps my lord will find something of interest."

Humming, Jian Chen began to communicate with the azure and violet Sword Spirits. "Ziying, Qingsuo, is there anything else of value here?"

"Master, only the Draconix Wood is of value. Neither of us thought that the Tian Yuan Continent would have it. Could they have brought it here?" Ziying thought.

Now knowing that the Draconix Wood was the only valuable object here, Jian Chen couldn't help but feel disappointed. Losing all motivation to stay here any longer, Jian Chen and the others left the store; much to the disappointment of the shopkeeper.

"Jian Chen, I am fully aware that you wouldn't buy such an expensive piece of wood without reason. Just what in the world is different about this piece? I can't wrap my head around it at all." As soon as they left the store, Ming Dong immediately piped up with his question.

"This piece of wood is called the Draconix Wood. I don't know its history, but it is an item with value beyond belief. To me, it is an

indispensable item needed to forge a weapon.”

“What? Forge a weapon?” Ming Dong was flabbergasted. As if unclear, he asked again for clarification, “Jian Chen, what did you just say? Forge a weapon? With your strength, do you really need materials for a weapon?”

At this, You Yue and Tie Ta looked curiously at Jian Chen as well. Forging a weapon was extremely rare on the Tian Yuan Continent.

“As of now, I have no way of responding to that question in earnest. Let’s not discuss this for now and continue on our stroll to see if we can find Xiao Bai any heavenly resources.”

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One of the three strongest clans, the Heiming clan, sat in the southside of Fengyang City. As of that moment, the entire place was quite lively with noise.

Within the luxuriously decorated rooms, a white-faced youth could be seen lying on top of a bed. His entire forehead was drenched in sweat, and his face was contorted in pain.

A white-robed middle-aged man slowly withdrew his palm from the youth. With exhaustion, the man stared at the other middle-aged man who stood gravely nearby, “Lord Heiming, the wounds of your second son are quite severe. With my capabilities as a Radiant Saint Master, I am unable to fully cure his wounds in a

single attempt. I will require several attempts.”

This grave-faced man was in fact the head of the Heiming clan.

The man nodded his head, “Esteemed master Zha Ke, please rest.”

After Zha Ke left, the man strode to the bed and grimly asked, “Jian’er, who did this to you?”

“Father, you must take revenge for me...” The youth began to recount the events that happened with even more details added to the fire like oil, so he shifted the blame completely onto Jian Chen.

Listening to his son, the head of the Heiming clan narrowed his eyes before sighing. “The Heavenly Phoenix Auction is currently selling two Class 5 Monster Cores. The auction has sent the entire city into an uproar. For now, let’s set aside this issue until this matter with the monster cores has been fully resolved. Several experts have gathered in the city as of late, you’d best keep quiet for now and avoid trouble.”

“Father, are we going to let that bastard get away with this so easily? I was humiliated in front of the eyes of many people; if our Heiming clan sits by the side and does nothing, then how will the people of Fengyang City see us? What face would we have to continue to call ourselves one of the three strongest clans of the city?” The youth sputtered in indignation.

“That’s enough. I will make the preparations, but now is not quite the time for it. Acting rashly will only create a new knot in the tree. Stay here and continue to recuperate.” With that, the man left the room.

Within a large courtyard in another part of the city, a red-skirt-wearing woman sat next to a window with a troubled expression. “Who would have known that the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House would suddenly sell two Class 5 Monster Cores at this time? What a ruckus that’ll create — what a battle it’ll cause. The Yun family doesn’t have time for this, but that only means it is a chance for my mother’s blood debt to be fulfilled.”

The woman thought back to the spectacle that happened back at the inn, “I wonder who those people were,” She muttered. “Even their personalities were out of the ordinary. They must be men from a major clan with high positions. Their clan must be very strong if they don’t fear the Heiming clan.” As she spoke, a sudden gleam appeared in her eyes without disappearing.

After a long time, the woman finally whispered another line, “Perhaps, if possible, I could borrow their strength to destroy the Yun family...”

Jian Chen and the others continued to stroll around the city a while longer before finally returning to the inn they were staying at. They had traveled to many different streets and stores today. Aside from the Draconix Wood, they had found nothing to show for their efforts. Not even a five hundred year old heavenly resource could be found in the city, let alone a thousand year old one.

that night, Jian Chen sat on his bed in a meditational position. However, he was not using the energy from the monster cores to refine into Chaotic Force. He was instead trying to understand the energy of the world. Understanding this primal energy was the road one had to follow to become a Saint Ruler. There were no shortcuts for this path. It was only with full comprehension of the utmost degree would one be able to understand the mysteries of the world.

Since the cub had no heavenly resources to digest, it did not fall into a deep sleep this night. Instead, it rolled around with a bored expression on the bed. Its sharp claws tore the blankets to shreds in its attempt to alleviate its boredom.

The cub suddenly halted playing. Both of its eyes began to shine brightly toward the window like two candles in the dark room.

Without a sound, the windows began to open before a single figure darted into the room. It landed silently on the ground.

“Mrrrrr...” It let out a discontent growl. As if it had lost interest in the shadow, the tiger resumed rolling around on the bed.

## Chapter 560: Prosperous Auction (Two)

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At the same time the figure entered the room, Jian Chen slowly opened his eyes. He was seated on the bed, “Were there any problems?”

“None, but plenty of people were trying to follow me. I was able to throw them off with ease, but not too long after each try, they managed to find me again. I would assume they are the local powers of the city with eyes all over the place. Unless I can alter my face and change my body, I won’t be able to completely throw them off.” The figure replied in a plain voice. It was Dugu Feng.

“Yes, this situation was within my expectations. A Class 5 Monster Core is far too rare of an item to appear in such a city like this. Not attracting their eyes would be strange.” Jian Chen pondered. “Dugu Feng, for now, hide yourself and do not let them find you. Do not reveal your strength either; otherwise, it might hinder my plans.”

“I understand.” Dugu Feng emotionlessly responded. Although he was confused by what this plan was, he did not voice his concerns.

“You may go, wait until the auction ends before convening with us.” Jian Chen commanded.

With a faint nod, Dugu Feng said nothing more, and disappeared into a black shadow out the window and without a sound.

Waving his hand, Jian Chen blew the window covers back into their closed position...

News of the fact that the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House was selling two Class 5 Monster Cores had quickly spread throughout Fengyang City like a torrent of rain on the roofs of every household. The very instant they heard that the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House selling them, many of the more powerful families had sent out a flying type magical beast to give reports to distant places. Within a mere four hours, everyone within a thousand mile circumference had heard the news.

Class 5 Monster Cores appeared within First Class cities at a decent rate, but they were still considered a rare sight. Now that two of them had appeared in a Second Class city, everyone who heard the news was rather taken aback by it.

Not long later, every single person that was in charge of a local power came running over. They brought along their strongest experts as they rushed to Fengyang City. Despite there being time until the auction, everyone was impatient to get there as fast as possible.

On the second day after the news was sent out, many strong individuals had already shown up in Fengyang City on their mounts in numbers of a hundred.

When these people arrived in Fengyang City, the power holders of the city felt a considerable amount of pressure. The leaders of the three strongest clans had convened to form a collaborative might that would discourage anyone from trying to knock them



out of their positions. Although it was very unlikely that something malicious would occur, this collaboration would let all of the foreign visitors know who the strongest were in the city and show that they were not to be trifled with.

Following the arrival of these men, the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House grew rather lively. There was someone practically every day who would come to inquire about the Class 5 Monster Cores. Some would ask to verify if it was true while others came to ask just which individual had supplied them.

No matter how highly the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House safeguarded their secrets, the power of these foreign individuals was not to be belittled. After a good amount of work, they were able to uncover a shallow bit of information about who supplied them. Soon, this piece of information made its way around the city.

Dugu Feng found himself watched by the eyes of many. He was not capable of changing his face as easily as Jian Chen was, and even with his strength as an Earth Saint Master, there were far too many informers that scoured every nook and cranny of the city to find him. With his prideful nature, he was loathe to hide in a dingy and desolate area. Neither did he wish to continue running and hiding from the weaklings that chased him. However, Jian Chen had told him to keep his identity hidden while not taking any drastic measures. In the end, Dugu Feng's arms and legs were tied. Without using his skill to intimidate everyone, he could only temporarily leave Fengyang City.

News of Dugu Feng's departure from the city had quickly made

its way around. How could anyone who wasn't an Earth Saint Master possibly hope to catch the fast Dugu Feng after he entered the vast outskirts? Therefore, after Dugu Feng left, everyone felt dejected to find that their clues were no longer any use. Such a realization had angered plenty of leaders.

Within Fengyang City in a very luxurious room, several of the more authoritative powers of the Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion had gathered inside. On the bed was an elderly man who sat in a kneeling position — he was the headmaster of the pavilion. Knowing that Fengyang City was now auctioning Class 5 Monster Cores rather than the carcass of a Class 5 Magical Beast, he had personally made the trip here to see it.

“Zhou Tong, two years ago two Class 5 Magical Beast corpses found their way into the auction house of Fengyang City. And now two years later, two Class 5 Monster Cores are being auctioned. Do you think the supplier behind it is the same person?” The headmaster's eyes turned to look to the man next to him.

Zhou Tong was the vice-headmaster of the Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion. Although his appearance made him look like a middle-aged man, his true age wasn't too far off from the headmaster.

Humming, Zhou Tong said, “The man today looks very different compared to the Wu Yun of two years ago. However, that Wu Yun had a mysterious technique that could change his face. If it weren't for the fact someone managed to douse him in a powder two years ago, we would have been completely fooled by his disguise. I can only guess that today's person is the very same Wu Yun as before.”

“I’ve heard of the matter two years ago. This Wu Yun is a complex person if he was able to make his escape with so many experts blocking his way. Having him kill so many is only a testament to his strength. Even I would find it hard to accomplish what he did.” The headmaster sighed in praise.

Zhou Tong couldn’t help but think back to the alarming memories of two years ago, “That Wu Yun’s strength was indeed tremendously strong. With two years passing by now, he has to have made great strides in improvement. Otherwise, he wouldn’t be selling two Class 5 Monster Cores in Fengyang City.”

Growing silent to think to himself, the headmaster grunted, “Zhou Tong, this Wu Yun is a person our pavilion should not offend at all costs. If possible, we should rope him into our good graces; this man is not a regular man.”

“Yes, headmaster!”

.....

In another inn, several middle-aged men were currently seated in a luxurious room.

“The one who is selling these Class 5 Monster Cores has to be the very same Wu Yun as two years ago. Bah, he killed plenty of the expert of our Youlan clan, and siphoned away plenty of our power. This time our Youlan clan will show our true might without forgiveness. Not only will we obtain the Class 5 Monster Core, we will take what blood he has spilled from us out from his own

body.” A middle-aged man fumed with rage as his eyes reflected his hostile intentions.

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Not too far away from the auction house, a black-robed elder smiled coldly from on top of a nearby inn. Laughing to himself, he said, “Wu Yun, oh Wu Yun. What a vitality you have. Two years ago, you plummeted down a bottomless chasm, yet you survived! Now that you’ve appeared just this once again, I won’t let you escape again like last time. Even if you’ve grown much stronger than you were two years ago, you will still not be a match for Ankhs and I. For the very reason of fighting you for that battle skill, I have enlisted Ankhs to help me from the Harido clan!”

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The following days came with an influx of people that flowed into Fengyang City. News of a Class 5 Monster Core spread farther and farther as well. From earlier, only people within a thousand miles had heard of it, but now, people over a thousand miles had heard it as well. Even some of the families from the First Class cities had come to visit.

It was truly a gathering of dragons within Fengyang City. The entire city was not in an uproar because of the situation. Instead, they were quite subdued by their lifestyles. No matter how much they tried to hide it, the people of the city felt a tremendous amount of pressure on them. Even the mercenaries and the young masters of the richer clans had kicked their arrogance down a notch. Even they realized that one could never be too sure if one

would meet a civilian or a person one could not offend.

After all, men of great strength did not need to reveal it to the public.

Seven days quickly passed by; it was now the day that the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House would begin its auction. All of the individuals from the city gathered in front of the auction house. Their gathering allowed the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House to witness an unprecedented amount of incredible experts that had never been surpassed in their history.

In these seven days, Jian Chen and the group had lived relatively well. With the Heiming clan otherwise preoccupied with the internal affairs of the city, Jian Chen and the others could safely walk through the city without being bothered.

Plenty of men had already gathered outside the gates to the auction house before striding through the opening gates. Jian Chen and the others did not enter there. They took the entrance for the honored guests. These rooms had been paid for by Jian Chen for a considerable amount of money earlier.

Sitting down in a well-decorated room in boredom, Jian Chen had to wait another two hours before the auction would formally start. This auction would be very important to the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House, so they had the manager miss Yulian take charge of the entire ceremony.

When Yulian stepped onto the platform, she stepped behind a rather pricey-looking table where a single fist-sized stone could be

seen. Distributing all sorts of color, this Class 5 Monster Core sparkled where it rested. Right by Yulian's side was a cold-faced middle-aged man.

# Chapter 561: Prosperous Auction (Three)

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Over ten thousand people had crammed inside the great halls of the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House. The news about two Class 5 Monster Cores being auctioned had attracted far more people than the carcasses of the two Class 5 Magical Beasts that had been auctioned before. This time, the auction house didn't charge a service fee. Instead they only asked for an entrance fee.

That wasn't the most important part. The most important part was that in the history of the auction, they had never earned so much money or fame before. Selling two Class 5 Monster Cores was something that even First Class cities would rarely offer, but the Heavenly Phoenix Auction had finally done it. While still far away from being the number one auction house in the Blue Wind Kingdom, they would now be many times better than before.

With over ten thousand people, there was not a single vacant spot left open. As far as the eye could see, only a sea of heads could be observed. At this current moment, the entire auction house was still as everyone stared with pointed eyes at the stage where the Class 5 Monster Cores would be displayed.

The extremely precious Class 5 Monster Cores were something that only the strong could touch. Those of the common stock would never be allowed to take possession of them. However, since this was the very first time that any had appeared in Fengyang City, anyone that had never seen a Class 5 Monster Core before had been very curious and deeply desired to see one.

While everyone had paid the costly entrance fee to enter the

auction house, not everyone was there to try and bid for the Class 5 Monster Cores. The majority of them had only wished to see the core since they knew of the rarity of one. Without a strong backing, none of them would be able to try and lay claim to the monster core. Otherwise, even if they did, they wouldn't have the strength to protect it.

When the main host, Yulian, saw that everyone's eyes were on her, she smiled. "I am the manager of the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House, Yulian. Today, I speak on behalf of the entire auction house when I welcome everyone for participating in our unprecedented turn out in the history of our operation..."

After making an introductory speech, Yulian's eyes turned to look at the middle-aged man by her side. "Please allow me to introduce this guest. Our Heavenly Phoenix Auction house has taken precautions to make sure no one would dare try to steal it because of the high value of Class 5 Monster Cores. So, with a request for the city lord of Huaxin City, we were able to invite an Earth Saint Master to come protect them. This Earth Saint Master guest is the esteemed mister Bu Ken."

This next part of Yulian had only been mentioned so that she would discourage anyone from trying to steal it while it was in their possession.

When they heard that the person next to Yulian was an Earth Saint Master, everyone had turned to look at him with eyes of admiration and envy. Earth Saint Masters were far and few in Fengyang City. As of right now, only the city lord and the leaders of the three major clans were Earth Saint Masters.



With everything cleared up, Yulian had decided to get straight to the point. Clearing her throat, she said, “Alright. This one won’t waste everyone’s precious time anymore. Let the auction for the Class 5 Monster Cores officially begin! Our first core will be set at a price of ten thousand purple coins, every bid will further increase it by another thousand purple coins.”

Before anyone else could even speak after Yulian had finished speaking, an elderly voice boomed from one of the VIP rooms.

“My Harido clan bids eleven thousand purple coins. My Harido clan needs only this one monster core and will not participate in this auction anymore after we own one. I hope that everyone here will give my Harido clan some face.”

A strange silence descended after the old man finished speaking. Everyone glanced at the VIP booth where the voice had originated from with furrowed eyebrows. Those who were just about to start bidding closed their mouths and gave a helpless shrug of their shoulders.

Yulian’s eyebrows furrowed together as well with a cross look in the direction of the booth where the man from the Harido clan was. A Class 5 Monster Core was not an easy thing to price on the continent, and the Harido clan was not a clan where anyone would easily dare to start a price war with. To only buy a Class 5 Monster Core for eleven thousand purple coins was a truly outrageous idea, and Yulian was furious to see such a low price like that be the final price for the core.

Within one of the other booths, a youth spoke with an indignant voice, “The way this Harido clan works is far too much. A Class 5 Monster Core for only eleven thousand? Bah, what a blue-blooded family that clan is if they are only offering a sum like that.”

The middle-aged man sitting next to the youth gave a reply, “The Harido clan keeps a low profile, but their strength is beyond strong. No family would dare try to fight them, and with the Harido clan giving this price now, it seems that this will be the lowest priced Class 5 Monster Core in history. What a great deal for the Harido clan, a Class 5 Monster Core would normally fetch a price of a hundred thousand purple coins at the very least within any other city.”

In another booth, a dozen men of differing ages were gathered. If anyone familiar with Fengyang City were to see the people of this room, then their jaws would drop to the ground in surprise. Each one of these men were representatives of the strongest four powers in Fengyang City — specifically the city government and the three clans.

For the sake of obtaining one of the Class 5 Monster Cores, the four of them had joined forces for the time being.

The rather pricy tea cup in the city lord’s hand had practically been reduced to dust and tea when his hand had shattered it. With a deep growl, he said, “This Harido clan is audacious if they think they can buy a Class 5 Monster Core for such a low price.”

“Our Fengyang City has attracted the attention of plenty of strong powers from our surrounding area this time. Even those

from First Class Cities have decided to participate. I would have to presume the Harido clan is one of those powers. If the Harido clan wishes to monopolize the Class 5 Monster Core, then I believe our chances of obtaining one won't be as easy as buying the corpse of the Class 5 Magical Beast like last time." The head of the Heiming clan spoke.

"Correct. The Harido clan is a clan we should fear at all costs. Even the Blue Wind Kingdom as a whole is not too far above the Harido clan. They too would have to fear the Harido clan."

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Four men sat in another VIP booth. There was a single child around the age of ten along with two middle-aged men and a white-haired elderly man.

"Grandfather, isn't this Harido clan a bit too much? As if a Class 5 Monster Core can be bought for only eleven thousand tpurple coins. We can't let them buy it!" The child had spoken with a very discontent face.

Giving a small smile, the elder explained, "Child, the Harido clan isn't a clan we can offend. They are beyond what you could imagine in strength. The founder of the clan still lives to this very day, and his strength is that of a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master. He only requires a single step to become a Heaven Saint Master, so it should only take him another hundred years or so before the breakthrough happens. The he will step into the next realm."

Startled, the child replied, “Then doesn’t that mean that the Harido clan will soon become one of the strongest powers in the Blue Wind Kingdom?”

“Correct. Though, whether or not the Harido clan will become one of the strongest clans in the kingdom will be up to whether or not their founder can become a Heaven Saint Master.”

No one in auction house, meaning everyone in the VIP booths, possessed an interest in raising the price above the Harido clan’s bid. Even the factions that had traveled from far away had no desire to offend the Harido clan.

After waiting for a long time on the platform, Yulian felt a depressed sigh well up inside her, especially when she saw no more takers, “It seems that this will be history’s cheapest Class 5 Monster Core.” She thought to herself.

Clearing away her negative thoughts, Yulian loudly said, “The Harido clan bids eleven thousand purple coins, are there any other takers? eleven thousand purple coins, going once!”

Jian Chen, Ming Dong, and You Yue were all talking among themselves in their chairs at a leisurely tempo. Only Tie Ta was staring out at the spectacle outside their booths since this would be the very first time he had been to an auction. His entire body practically threatened to break through the window in excitement.

The windows to the VIP booths were specially made so that the people sitting within the booths could see outside without a

problem while the people outside could not see what was happening within the booths.

“Bah, eleven thousand purple coins for a Class 5 Monster Core. This Harido clan is far too frugal with their money.” Jian Chen gave a short snort from his seat.

Sitting right next to Jian Chen, You Yue turned to speak to him after listening to what he said, “We definitely can’t let the Harido clan get away with this. If they truly do buy this monster core for eleven thousand purple coins, we’d starve to death with our losses.”

“That’s only natural. I didn’t bring out these two Class 5 Monster Cores to sell. I am in no shortage of money.” Jian Chen laughed.

“Eleven thousand purple coin going twice!” Yulian’s voice could be heard once again. Like before, no one spoke to offer another bid over the Harido clan’s offer.

Within the Harido clan’s booth, three men sat inside — one middle-aged man and two elders.

“It seems like our Harido clan will be benefitting from quite a deal if we buy a Class 5 Monster Core for such a tremendously low price. Kaizer, you are truly a smarter individual than I am.” An elder laughed in delight.

Seated right next to this elder, the other laughed as well, “This is

truly a great profit, but this only a small one. Wait until after the auction finishes, an even nicer surprise will be waiting for us.”

“What surprise? Even now, you refuse to say what it is.” The elder asked in a happy mood.

Kaizer gave a secretive smile to the elder, “It’s a secret for now, you’ll understand in a moment.”

“Forget it. If you won’t speak of it, then I won’t ask anymore. But this Class 5 Monster Core is as good as ours. As low-profile as our Harido clan is, we are still a power that no one would try to go against in the Blue Wind Kingdom.” The elder replied.

Suddenly, a voice could be heard from one of the other booths as soon as the elderly man finished speaking.

“I offer two thousand purple coins!”

Not only was the elder stunned, but even Kaizer had fallen into a daze as well.

## Chapter 562: Prosperous Auction (Four)

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With this sudden new bid, the entire auction house was alarmed. Not even the smallest of peeps could be heard after the Harido clan had given their astonishingly low bid. Everyone understood just how strong the Harido clan was, so no one was willing to bid against their price.

When someone had given an offer higher than the Harido clan, it basically meant they gave no face to the Harido clan. Such an audacious person like this basically meant they did not fear the Harido clan's strength.

The auction house had been sent onto a flutter of discussions at this new price. This new speaker didn't announce what family or power he represented, so no one had any idea just where this person was from or what family could possibly be strong enough to act in such a manner toward the Harido clan.

Even those sitting within the other VIP booths could only stare in shock and curiosity at the one that had spoken. Within the Blue Wind Kingdom, the Harido clan were known as one of the stronger clans with only a few daring to ever go against them. Each one of them were very curious about the identity of this mysterious person who would go against the Harido clan. The greatly desired to learn the answer.

Within the booth of the Harido clan, Kaizer and the other man looked rather cross.

“Just who is this person that would dare oppose our Harido clan?” The elder asked with a growl as he sank into an unhappy mood. Originally he had been very happy to pay such a low price for a Class 5 Monster Core. What he didn’t imagine was that there would actually be someone else that would try to interfere.

Kaizer had quickly calmed back down with a careless smile. “Ankhs, don’t you worry. Buying a Class 5 Monster Core for eleven thousand purple coins would make everyone feel quite unsettled in their hearts. Perhaps these people only wish for our Harido clan to offer a bit more money?”

Hearing this, the elder known as Ankhs saw the reasoning behind it. With a hollow smile, he replied, “Right. Eleven thousand purple coins is simply a very low price for a Class 5 Monster Core. If one were to be sold within a First Class city, I’m afraid that they would go no lower than a hundred or two hundred thousand purple coins. If we were to really buy one for such a low price, then those who invested such a large sum would boil over in anger. Forget it, our clan isn’t short on money. Why don’t we sweeten the pot then?” With that, Ankhs thought for a moment before calling out an even larger price. “Fifty thousand purple coins!”

Whomever this second bidder was, Yulian had been extremely delighted to hear them increase the bid. She had been very unwilling to let the priceless Class 5 Monster Core be taken away for such an outrageous sum. The two Class 5 Monster Cores had a service fee attached to them, meaning that the more it was sold for, the more the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House would earn. Although the entrance fee for this event alone had made the auction house a wealthy sum of money, it would not fill the money pouch they had on their waists.



Yulian gave an appreciative glance at the booth where the twenty thousand purple coin bidder was. Although the price was now a mere forty thousand purple coins more than before, it was far better than a measly eleven thousand purple coins.

“The Harido clan has offered fifty thousand purple coins, is there anyone that wishes to go higher?” Yulian asked in a loud voice. Her eyes were not looking at the booth housing the Harido clan. Instead, she gave an expectant glance at the booth of the second bidder. Right now, in the entire auction house, this booth contained the only people that would dare to stand up against the Harido clan.

“Sixty thousand purple coins.” Not failing to disappoint Yulian, the booth had once again called out a price ten thousand more than the Harido clan’s offer. This price made the previously eleven thousand purple coins pale in comparison.

“Sixty thousand purple coins, is there anyone else that wishes to go even higher?” Yulian excitedly spoke as she announced the new bid to the entire room.

Right now, the eyes of everyone within the auction house had gathered upon the booth that was going into a price war with the Harido clan. Everyone was absolutely dying to see just who the room contained.

The eyebrows of Ankhs and Kaizer had furrowed together once more. As soon as they announced another price of fifty thousand,

the opposing side had again announced an even higher price of sixty thousand, and the tone of the other bidder had conveyed a message that gave a bad feeling to the other two.

Growing silent for a moment, Ankhs called out another price, “Eighty thousand purple coins!”

No sooner did Ankhs finish speaking when the other booth had called out an even higher price, “A hundred thousand purple coins!”

“A hundred thousand purple coins! A hundred thousand purple coins, are there any other bids?” Yulian cried out in excitement. The previously anxious face of Yulian had become extremely delighted after hearing the price raise almost instantaneously.

Within the booth of the Harido clan, Ankhs and Kaizer’s face had grown dark.

“It seems that this matter is not as simple as we thought. There is someone that seems keen on going against our clan.” Kaizer growled.

Ankhs did not answer him and snorted before calling out another price, “One hundred and ten thousand!” This price was already going far beyond what he expected, but for a Class 5 Monster Core, it was not a loss.

“One hundred and twenty.” Came the next bid.

“One hundred and thirty.” Ankhs growled.

“One hundred and forty.” Before anyone else could even think about what was happening, Ankhs had already been outbidded.

Squeezing tighter and tighter, Ankhs’ hand gave several cracking sounds as his anger reached a boiling point. The murderous killing intent flowed unrestrained in his eyes.

“Just who is this man for him to compete against us in an unrelenting manner?” Ankhs growled.

Kaizer’s eyes had become frosty as well. “Our Harido clan is not lacking in money. If he wishes to do battle, then a battle we shall give him — one hundred and fifty!”

“One hundred and sixty...”

“One hundred and seventy...”

“One hundred and eighty...”

Soon, both bidders had engaged in a battle of prices within the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House. With each bid, the next bid upped the price by ten thousand. As wealthy as they sounded, neither side looked as if they treated money for what it was. In a flash, the insignificant sum of eleven thousand had almost

transformed into a mighty sum of two hundred thousand purple coins. The heart of Yulian had nearly exploded with joy, and she could not express her appreciation for the figure even if her life depended upon it now.

As soon as two hundred thousand had been reached as the price, Kaizer could handle it no longer. With a strong voice that reverberated across the auction house, he said, “Friend, if you are affiliated with no faction or clan, why must you make things difficult for my Harido clan? This is quite the aggressive assault on us.” Kaizer’s voice appeared calm without any apparent irritation. The Harido clan wasn’t too influential in the Gesun Kingdom and did not have a good amount of knowledge on the powers there. He didn’t speak too rudely since he was afraid of angering someone he shouldn’t anger.

“In an auction house, everything goes to the highest bidder. Since when have we making life difficult for the Harido clan? We are only playing by the rules of the auction house, that’s all.” This time, the voice of a woman could be heard. She was melodious in her speech and rather pleasant to hear.

## Chapter 563: Prosperous Auction (Five)

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When everyone heard the voice of a woman, many of the men's eyes lit up. They tried to guess just which powerful family had groomed such a beloved daughter that they would allow to throw out so much money against the Harido clan.

Some of the men who took themselves to be rather handsome had even begun to dream about attracting the heart of this woman. If they could do that, they would be able to win glory, splendor, wealth, and rank in the future.

“Even if we can't see her, such a voice like this can only mean that the young miss is a very beautiful woman. If we could see her face, I would be content.”

“What a nice voice, I wonder which beauty would have such a voice like this.”

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Within the auction house, plenty of people could be heard talking to one another as they stared expectantly at the booths. They were all filled with a thirst to gain the ability to see through the window that separated the booth from the hall. They wanted to see the inhabitants inside.

Within the Harido clan's booth, Kaizer and Ankhs had been knocked for a loop when they realized that it was a woman that was fighting them in a price war for the Class 5 Monster Core.

Once more, Kaizer spoke up, “If I may ask which clan you are from, miss.”

“We are only a small mercenary group of little renown, that is all.” This time, a man replied in a calm voice.

This calm voice had been filled with a tone that made Kaizer look even more unsettled. To him, this man’s voice was filled with no respect for him at all. It was a voice of indifference that revealed that its thoughts were above the Harido clan and that it despised the clan without any respect.

Furious, Ankhs let out an angry growl, “Within the Blue Wind Kingdom, our Harido clan has very few rivals, and even those other factions would have to do as our clan wishes with a look of respect on their faces. Not only are these whelps making things difficult for our clan, they are refusing to even treat us as a clan to even look at. Unforgivable. Wait until this auction is over; no matter who they are, I will teach them all a lesson that they will never forget.”

Kaizer snorted as well, “I agree. This cannot be pardoned. From their voices, I can guess that they aren’t that old. Hmph, a bunch of young upstarts that know naught of the immensities of the heavens and earth. They are brats that only know the pond of their backyard if they don’t know the might of our Harido clan.”

“Well said. Our clan won’t be missing any money even after this, so why not see just how much money they have. Two hundred and ten thousand!” Ankhs called out an even higher price.

“Two hundred and twenty thousand.” The other booth called out in response.

Even a crow and peacock would refuse to make a sound in this auction house. Only the two booths continued to make noise now. Yulian herself was included in this silence. She could only sit there in a stunned state of bliss. Two hundred thousand purple coins was far beyond what the original price had been.

“Two hundred and thirty thousand.” Ankhs spat out the next price with clenched teeth and a dangerous-looking face.

“Two hundred and fifty thousand.” There had been no pressure in the speaker’s voice from the other booth as he effortlessly gave a price twenty thousand higher than the previous bid.

“Bastards, just how much money do they have?” Ankhs slapped his palm against the table and promptly broke it to pieces. Two hundred and fifty thousand purple coins was already more than what a Class 5 Monster Core should cost.

With eyes that could freeze the air they looked at, Kaizer hesitated to speak for a moment before relenting, “Two hundred and sixty thousand.”

“Three hundred thousand...” As soon as Kaizer had finished speaking, the other side increased the bid by another forty thousand purple coins. Such an overbearing attitude like this was no longer treating money as money.

Kaizer's and Ankhs' fists were clenched extremely tight by this point. Their bodies leaked a tremendous amount of killing intent that could be felt by even the inhabitants of the auction house. Everyone knew that the ones in a price war with the Harido clan had offended the entire Harido clan now.

Within the other room, Jian Chen, Ming Dong, You Yue, and Tie Ta were eating their pieces of fruit without a care in the world. The people who had been outbidding the Harido clan the entire time had been Jian Chen's group.

Sensing the amount of killing intent radiating from the room where the Harido clan was, Jian Chen revealed a cold smile on his face, "Men of the Harido clan, this is only a fair competition. What reason is there to be angry? If you do not have the money to match us, then be obedient and bow out."

Jian Chen's words had caused the bodies of Kaizer and Ankhs to wildly convulsed. The two of them would likely have destroyed the booths in an attempt to tear apart Jian Chen if they had forgotten where they were.

This time, the Harido clan did not announce another bid in response. Although they were a wealthy clan, three hundred thousand purple coins to buy a single Class 5 Monster Core was not worth it in their minds.

After a long period of silence, Yulian had finally found herself speaking again, "The honored guest within booth eight has bid



three hundred thousand purple coins. Are there any other takers? Three hundred thousand purple coins going once.” Yulian’s voice couldn’t help but shake as she spoke. This price was simply astronomical to her previous expectations.

“Three hundred thousand purple coins going twice...”

“Three hundred thousand purple coins going thrice, and sold! I now declare that the first Class 5 Monster Core has been bought by the guests in booth eight.”

The wooden hammer of Yulian smashed against the table, declaring that the first Class 5 Monster Core had been bought for three hundred thousand purple coins.

Within booth eight, Tie Ta stared at Jian Chen in confusion, “Jian Chen, you spent so much money to buy a Class 5 Monster Core? Why? That’s not worth it.”

Smiling slightly, Jian Chen replied, “Three hundred thousand purple coins sounds like a lot, but it isn’t anything to me. This money was really just something that fell into the hands of the people in this group. Like the hair from nine oxen, this is nothing.”

“Jian Chen, you wouldn’t do something so senseless like this without reason. Do you have a hatred of some sort that required you to use the Class 5 Monster Cores to draw them out?” Ming Dong asked out of curiosity.

Ming Dong's words had caused memories to flash back into Jian Chen's mind. His eyes took on a slightly harsher glint to them as he replied, "Correct. I have a debt to pay with them. Two years ago, I sold the bodies of two Class 5 Magical Beasts in this auction house. In the middle of it all, the people of the many clans and families chased me. At that time, I was only a Saint Master. With so many people chasing after me, I barely made it out of that place alive. An Earth Saint Master from the Harido clan chased me to the point where I was forced off a cliff in a narrow escape."

Ming Dong's eyes had a flash of killing intent at his words. With a growl, he replied, "So I see. In that case, this hatred will be something that they will definitely pay for. I guarantee it, brother."

Sitting right next to Jian Chen, You Yue said nothing, and instead stared at him with eyes that reflected none of the tranquil expression on her face. Jian Chen's words had painted a clear picture in her mind. It was in this moment that she realized just how terrifying a situation Jian Chen had suffered if so many individuals had chased Jian Chen as a Saint Master. Such a traumatizing experience would make any person shudder.

"Yan Kaizer of the Harido clan. Not once will I ever forget this name." Jian Chen's eyes frosted over with an aura of killing intent.

After the first Class 5 Monster Core was sold, there was a small break before the second monster core could begin being auctioned.

"Now we shall begin the auction of the second Class 5 Monster Core. The starting price will be fifty thousand purple coins. Each

bid will be a minimum of a thousand purple coins. This will be the very last Class 5 Monster Core, so I implore each and every guest to cherish their time and make their decision — this will be a once-in-a-lifetime chance to obtain a Class 5 Monster Core with ease.” Yulian announced with a loud voice. She was filled with hope for this next auction, and could not wait to see just how much money the second monster core would sell for.

At the end of her words, plenty of people had immediately launched into a barrage of prices.

“Sixty thousand purple coins....”

“Seventy thousand!”

“Seventy five thousand!”

One by one the bidders in the booths had increased the price. This time the Harido clan did not bother to interject with their own price so the amount of people fighting for this one had increased exponentially. Soon enough, the price had already gone over a one hundred thousand purple coins.

“The Youlan clan offers one hundred ten thousand purple coins...”

“The Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion offers one hundred ten thousand five hundred purple coins...”

“The Tianhua Sect offers one hundred twenty thousand purple coins...”

“The Mutian clan offers one hundred twenty thousand five hundred purple coins...”

“The Kadir clan offers one hundred thirty thousand...”

“One hundred forty thousand purple coins...”

“One hundred forty thousand five hundred purple coins...”

The price had already skyrocketed far beyond one hundred fifty thousand purple coins because of the intense price war. At this moment, a new bidder caused every other bidder to pause.

“The Blaze clan of Tianlong City offers one hundred eighty thousand purple coins. This Class 5 Monster Core is something my clan needs, I hope everyone will give my Blaze clan some face...”

“Our Feng family of Huaxin City offers one hundred ninety thousand purple coins. Our Feng family requires this Class 5 Monster Core as well, please do give us some face for this.”

Thus, the entire auction house was silent again. The Blaze clan of Tianlong City and the Feng family of Huaxin City were both factions from First Class cities. They were strong in power and were not figures that the Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion, the Youlan clan, or the three clans from Fengyang City could go

against by themselves.

“The three major clans and the city lord of Fengyang City desire this Class 5 Monster Core, we offer two hundred thousand purple coins.” The lord of Fengyang City had called out. With the three major clans of the city combined, they were truly now a figure that did not fear even the families of a First Class city.

A Class 5 Monster Core was truly too precious. In a First Class city, only one would appear every three years or so with a tremendous clash following each appearance. When Fengyang City declared an auction of two Class 5 Monster Cores, every single power-hungry person had decided this was not an opportunity to miss.

“Our Guyun clan offers two hundred ten thousand...”

“The Spirithawk Mercenaries offer two hundred twenty thousand...”

“The Wargod Sect offers two hundred thirty thousand purple coins...”

The price continued to climb. The words of even the clans of a First Class city were no longer any use here with no one else bothering to give them face. At this moment, every major faction had decided to risk it; some of these factions were ones with strengths that were almost comparable to the Harido clan's influence.

# Chapter 564: Winner Of The Second Class 5 Monster Core

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For the sake of giving face to the Harido clan, no one had fought over the first Class 5 Monster Core. Every single person in the auction house had understood how big of a threat the Harido clan was as one of the strongest factions in the Blue Wind Kingdom. Unless they had no choice, no one would feel the need to incur the wrath of the Harido clan; therefore, they had allowed the first monster core to be taken without a fight.

However, the second one would be the very last monster core sold by the auction house. There was no way anyone could possibly let this one go, so everyone enthusiastically bid for it.

“Two hundred forty thousand purple coins...”

“Two hundred fifty thousand...”

The price competition was going as strong as before, but there were significantly fewer people bidding now that the price had reached such a sum. Two hundred fifty thousand purple coins was already a shocking amount to everyone, but many people coveted the Class 5 Monster Core. If they didn't, they would have given up a long time ago.

“Two hundred sixty purple coins.” A short moment later, another person had placed their bid, and this time, the speaker had been the Harido clan. They had failed to buy the first monster core, so trying to buy the second one would not be a breach of their

promise.

“The Wargod Sect offers two hundred seventy thousand purple coins.”

“The Blaze clan offers two hundred eighty thousand.”

“The Feng family offers two hundred ninety thousand.”

“The Guyun clan offers three hundred thousand.”

Almost instantly, the Harido clan's bid had been tossed aside as if it was nothing. Right now, the Class 5 Monster Core was at three hundred thousand purple coins, a sum that very few could weather without disaster. Even the combined forces of the four factions in Fengyang City had no more money to continue on. This was a price that went beyond their plans.

Within their booth, the lord of Fengyang City helplessly shook his head. “It appears that the Class 5 Monster Core is not fated to be ours. The wealth and riches of these First Class city dwellers is far greater than what we could hope to scale up against.”

“It's unfortunate, a Class 5 Monster Core appeared within our very own city, but we were not able to obtain it. Blasted Heavenly Phoenix Auction House. It's no wonder they spread news of the monster cores to attract the attention of every single major party. Otherwise, we would have been able to take it for ourselves.” One of the men growled in regret.

“The Feng family bids three hundred ten thousand.”

“The Spirithawk Mercenaries bids three hundred twenty thousand.”

“The Feng family bids three hundred twenty five thousand.”

“The Spirithawk Mercenaries bids three hundred thirty thousand.”

Now that the price had broken past three hundred thousand purple coins, there were even less people participating. Up to this point, the Feng family and the Spirithawk Mercenaries were the only two parties left fighting.

After that, the Feng family and the Spirithawk Mercenaries fought each other a while longer. They brought the price to three hundred and fifty thousand purple coins.

As soon as this price had been reached, the Feng family no longer bid. Now that the two sides had finally stopped fighting, the previously lively auction house had grown quiet.

With the entire auction having gone silent and Yulian seeing no more takers, she finally said, “The Spirithawk Mercenaries have bid three hundred fifty thousand purple coins. Are there any other takers? Three hundred fifty thousand purple coins going once.”



“Three hundred fifty thousand purple coins going twice.”

“Three hundred purple coins going thrice.” Yulian’s hammer slammed against the table, “And now I declare that the second Class 5 Monster Core has been bought by the Spirithawk Mercenaries in booth fifteen for a total of three hundred fifty thousand purple coins.”

Within booth eight, Ming Dong stared at Jian Chen, “Brother, are you really just going to sell a Class 5 Monster core like that?”

Jian Chen hummed, “I originally planned on keeping both of them, but I’ve changed my mind. If there is a mercenary group that wants the monster core, then I’ll let them have it. In any case, we will be meeting the Spirithawk Mercenaries soon enough, so it’s best we don’t antagonize them.”

“That’s true. If we want mercenary groups swear allegiance to us, then it’d be best to not get on their bad sides. Otherwise, it would make things difficult for us when we try to make them swear in the first place.” You Yue spoke.

Standing up from his chair, Jian Chen said, “Now that the auction is over, we should leave this place. A good show will be taking place in a moment.”

The Heavenly Phoenix Auction House had focused their entire auction on these two Class 5 Monster Cores this time, so when both of them had been sold, the auction was officially over. Everyone in the booths left the area one after another, and headed out of the

auction house.

After Jian Chen and the other three left the booths, they left for the area where the transactions would take place in the auction house. On the way, they past by plenty of precious items.

This time, the manager of the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House, Yulian, came to personally witness the trade of the Class 5 Monster Cores.

Walking up to the platform, Jian Chen handed over the booth number and a purple card to Yulian. When she took the booth number and gave it a look, Yulian realized that Jian Chen and his party was the very same party that had bid against the Harido clan for the first monster core. With a startled light in her eyes, Yulian studied Jian Chen and his group with a growing amount of alarm. She did not think that the mysterious individual that would stand up against the Harido clan would be four youths. Not a single elder could be seen in this party, and Yulian had her expectations completely blown away.

“Milords are quite bold to bid three hundred thousand purple coins to buy a Class 5 Monster Core. Might this one know what to call you?” Yulian smiled with a passionate smile in an attempt to scour out what power stood behind this group.

Smiling, Jian Chen replied, “Manager Yulian, if I could trouble you to hand over my item!”

Seeing that the other side wasn’t willing to divulge their

identities, Yulian did not press the issue. She hid her discontent with a smile. “Very well, allow this woman to oversee the transaction.”

At that moment, a group of well-armored men came walking forward. When the doughty-looking man up front noticed Jian Chen's group, he let out a smile, “You must be the lords and lady of booth eight — the one that bid against the Harido clan. This one is the captain of the Spirithawk Mercenaries, Ying Changkong.”

Turning his head, Jian Chen saw a man who was roughly fifty years old. The captain was completely draped in black, and possessed an imposing two-meter-tall figure — an entire head taller than Jian Chen. On the left side of his face, there was a terrifying wound that completely disfigured the left side of his face, but added to his intimidation factor.

“Milords and lady, which powerful family might you be the sons and daughter of in the Blue Wind Kingdom? Perhaps I have some sort of friendship with one of your seniors? Ah, I heard mention that you were from a mercenary group, which one might you belong to?” Ying Changkong asked in curiosity.

Jian Chen gave a small smile, “Allow me to keep the answer a secret for now. Ying Changkong, we will meet again in the near future.” Yulian had already finished the transaction. She handed the Class 5 Monster Core and the purple card back to Jian Chen by now.

Taking both items, he and the other three left the auction house. The captain of the Spirithawk Mercenaries was left standing there

deep in thought as he tried to decipher the meaning behind Jian Chen's words.

Outside the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House, an endless stream of people could be seen. Right outside the VIP booths, Kaizer and Ankhs from the Harido clan could be seen staring icily at the entrance as they waited for the people from the eighth booth to come out. All around them were spectators from every major party waiting to see the action. They too were curious to see just what type of deity would oppose the Harido clan.

At that moment, the red-robed Dugu Feng had returned to the city and strode over to the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House. Now that the auction was over, his mission given to him by Jian Chen was accomplished, and there was no longer a need to hide and conceal himself.

“Look! He's the one who sold the Class 5 Monster Cores to the auction house.”

As soon as Dugu Feng came close to the Auction House, every single person who had kept tabs on him had immediately noticed his arrival. They spread news of who he was.

The eyes of everyone who were waiting patiently by the VIP entrance had immediately shifted to Dugu Feng.

“Wu Yun, he has to be Wu Yun! Bah, that Wu Yun knows how to change his face. Don't think you can trick us by hiding your face, Wu Yun!” One of the middle-aged man from the Youlan clan glared

at Dugu Feng with a furious look.

The headmaster of the Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion stared at Dugu Feng, “Zhou Tong, is he Wu Yun?”

Zhou Tong observed Dugu Feng for a moment, “He’s completely different than he was two years ago. Though, Wu Yun has an ability to change his facial appearance almost seamlessly. I can’t make heads or tails from this. I can only say this person might be Wu Yun, but under a different face. Other than him, would there be anyone else with two Class 5 Monster Cores?”

“How can Wu Yun remain so calm with so many people surrounding him? I’d say that he has something to rely on to escape. We should watch the matter for now.” The headmaster whispered.

The chattering conversations reached the ears of Kaizer whose eyes immediately lit up. Concentrating on Dugu Feng, he coldly smiled, “Wu Yun, no matter how much you change your face, you cannot hide from these old eyes of mine. Last time you were lucky to survive, but this time, you will not escape these hands of mine. Your life is mine!” Kaizer gave up the idea of waiting for the people of the eighth booth. He immediately flew at Dugu Feng with his Saint Weapon in hand.

## Chapter 565: Mistaken Identity

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Kaizer flew out of the crowd while holding a giant hammer over his head. A streak of blue light was created the tremendous amount of water attributed Saint Force spilling from the hammer as it flew at Dugu Feng.

Coming to a stop, Dugu Feng stared expressionlessly at the figure coming at him. Without looking at Kaizer himself, a burst of fire suddenly exploded from his body. It coiled around him with a sweltering heat that raised the temperature of the surrounding area.

With the blaze burning all around his body, Dugu Feng looked as if he had transformed to become a god of fire. With his right hand held out, Dugu Feng clenched it into a fist, forcing the fire around him gather around it. With a swish of his hand, a ball made of fire immediately shot at Kaizer.

“Bang!”

The two attributes of opposing nature clashed against each other in mid-air with a loud explosion. The area gave a heavy shudder as the energy from the blast ran through it like an earthquake. Some of the bystanders were even forced back a step.

“Ea-earth Saint Master, this man is an Earth Saint Master!”

“Was Wu Yun always this strong? It’s no wonder that he was able to stave off all of the Great Saint Masters in this city two years ago!

Only an Earth Saint Master would be able to fight him now!”

“No wonder he was able to throw us off his tracks. He was an Earth Saint Master all this time! Dear heavens! I tried to track and fight an Earth Saint Master, it’s a good thing he didn’t fight us, or else none of us would have been left standing to find out that fact today.”

Loud gasps of shock could be heard everywhere as they stared at Dugu Feng in a new light. To be an Earth Saint Master in Fengyang City was to be one of the best. Respect was to be expected, and all other powers within the city would have to make way for one. Only a trifling four Earth Saint Masters lived in Fengyang City, and each one of them were leaders of a major power.

When “Wu Yun’s” strength had been revealed, many of the men who were presumptuous enough to want to attack him had immediately gave up that notion. An Earth Saint Master was not a power they could afford to mess with.

Kaizer fell back down to the ground with a grim expression on his face, “Wu Yun, who would have thought that your strength would make such a drastic change in two years? Becoming an Earth Saint Master, eh? You’ve pulled fortune out from disaster I see.”

With both hands clasped behind his back in a leisurely position, Dugu Feng merely stood with an empty expression in front of Kaizer. In his eyes there was a glint of a sneer and disdain. He didn’t know who this “Wu Yun” was at all, but he wasn’t an idiot. Connecting the thoughts with the strange plan Jian Chen had, he quickly made a rough guess that the person the man in front of

him was talking about was Jian Chen.

Seeing that “Wu Yun” did not speak, Kaizer continued to do so in his place, “Wu Yun, while you may have managed to become an Earth Saint Master, you don’t even hold a candle to the might of my Harido clan. I, Kaizer, extend the same offer I gave you two years ago. Hand over your battle skill to my Harido clan and we will not mistreat you any longer. Realize now that the ancestor of my clan is a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master. A step more is all he needs to become a Heaven Saint Master. It won’t even take another twenty years before my Harido clan becomes the strongest clan in the Blue Wind Kingdom!”

Kaizer’s words had delivered yet another wave of shock to the people around him. Each and every one of them knew just how arduous and bitter it was to breakthrough to become a Heaven Saint Master. If it would take the ancestor of the Harido clan just twenty years to become a Heaven Saint Master, that bit of information was simply unbelievable to hear.

The Blue Wind Kingdom was in a decline now that they had lost several Heaven Saint Masters in the recent war. Only four of them were left, and if the Harido clan were to add one more to that number, then becoming one of the top five would not be implausible for them.

A cold sneer appeared on Dugu Feng’s face. “I know many battle skills, but not the one you wish for.”

Kaizer was knocked for a loop at those words before an ecstatic look appeared on his face, “Then bring out your strongest battle



skill. Worry not, my Harido clan will not treat you unfairly.”

The sneer grew even larger as Dugu Feng stared down at Kaizer. “The strongest battle skill I have are two Heaven Tier Battle Skills, which one shall it be?”

“What!? Two Heaven Tier Battle Skills!?” Kaizer had immediately gone slack-jawed as he stared at Dugu Feng in disbelief. Waves of emotions flowed from his heart like a series of tidal waves. Heaven Tier Battle Skills were extremely sparse. Even the strongest major powers of the Blue Wind Kingdom didn’t own any Heaven Tier Battle Skills.

Dugu Feng’s words had not only caused Kaizer to be stunned, but also the people around him. Each one of them had gone blank in the face.

“He has a Heaven Tier Battle Skill? Heavens, that can’t be true.”

“Out of the surrounding kingdoms, only the Changyang clan of the Gesun Kingdom has a Heaven Tier Battle Skill. I’ve never heard of any other person in possession of a battle skill of the same magnitude.”

“Peh! Even Heaven Saint Masters would kill to have just one. How is it that an Earth Saint Master like him would have two? I don’t believe it for a second.”

“Yeah, he’s got to be lying.”

With everyone talking to one another, they were all convinced that Dugu Feng didn't have a Heaven Tier Battle Skill.

Even Kaizer didn't believe that this twenty something year old youth in front of him had a Heaven Tier Battle Skill. Taunting him, he said, "If you really have one, then why not show it for everyone to see!"

"That's right, show this Heaven Tier Battle Skill for us to see!"

"Open our eyes to this new world. Show us what a Heaven Tier Battle Skill looks like!"

As Kaizer finished speaking, everyone around him joined in conjunction with eyes that seemed to ridicule Dugu Feng.

Dugu Feng only smile coldly from where he stood. Looking behind Kaizer, he took notice of Jian Chen, Ming Dong, Tie Ta, and You Yue. They had just exited through the VIP entrance.

Just barely after Jian Chen had stepped out from the passageway, he gave a small chuckle, "Will wonders never cease? The auction has only just finished, yet there is already another spectacle to watch. What an exciting day this has been."

Jian Chen had not spoken in a loud voice, but when he spoke, everyone had clearly heard his words. They turned to face him and the other three.

Kaizer turned to look at Jian Chen. When he saw the handsome face of his, his eyes widened as he thought back to the Wu Yun of two years ago.

Jian Chen's face changing ability had fooled the eyes of many in Fengyang City, but he had still been forced to escape from the city using the wells and the passageways below. As a result, the herbs he had used to change his facial appearance had been completely washed away, allowing Kaizer to see Jian Chen's true face.

Staring hard at the familiar face of Jian Chen, Kaizer slowly enunciated his next phrase word for word. "So, you're the real Wu Yun."

Everyone was shocked once more when they heard what Kaizer had said. Looking at Jian Chen with bizarre eyes, none of them had ever expect to hear that they had nearly picked a fight with the wrong person.

Striding into the crowd, Jian Chen revealed a cold smile on his face, "Yan Kaizer, you still remember me it seems. I didn't expect that. You are correct, I am the Wu Yun you threw off the cliff two years ago."

With Jian Chen himself confirming who he was, everyone else had no other choice but to accept it. They had found the wrong person; this man who had sold the two Class 5 Monster Cores was not the same Wu Yun as two years ago.

Several strong-looking men quickly walked forward to surround Jian Chen's group. One of the men gave an angry declaration, "Wu Yun, you've killed many men from my Youlan clan, an unforgivable crime! You will not leave Fengyang City alive!"

From the Heiming clan's group, a middle-aged man hurried to the clan head and whispered into his ear, "My lord, he is the one that injured the young master a few days ago."

A bright light shined in the man's eyes as he replied, "I had not thought that it would be Wu Yun that injured my son. Peh, Wu Yun slaughtered many of our men two years ago, I shall make good on our debts, both old and new."

With that, the man waved his hand and two dozen of his men surrounded Jian Chen so tightly that not even water could escape.

Studying Jian Chen's group, Kaizer could only detect the strength of Tie Ta and You Yue. Ming Dong and Jian Chen on the other hand had completely hidden their presences. They made it so Kaizer had no way to determine their strength. However, Kaizer still hadn't thought the two of them to be a threat. They were young after all, they shouldn't be a match for him no matter how strong they were for their age.

Kaizer sneered, "Wu Yun, you've arrived at a good timing, I've nearly made ill with the wrong person." Whirling around to face Dugu Feng, Wu Yun hesitated for a moment before cupping his hands together. "Dear brother, I mistook you for another. I hope you forgive this sin of mine; perhaps in the future when there is time, please come to Loess City and have a seat with my Harido

clan.” If this person in front of him had been Wu Yun, then Kaizer would have killed him without thinking of the consequences. After throwing Wu Yun off a cliff two years ago, the hatred between the two would never be washed away without one of them being killed. With him mistaking the wrong person, Kaizer had immediately felt apologetic to this Earth Saint Master. The Harido clan would view an expert like this with high regards.

Dugu Feng refused to say anything, so Kaizer had decided not to mince anymore words. He turned to face everyone else. “I, Kaizer, have unfinished business with Wu Yun. Please allow my Harido clan to deal with this.”

Ankhs displayed a dark expression on his face as he stared at Jian Chen. “These four are the ones in booth eight that refused to stand down against my Harido clan. Everyone saw what happened in the auction house yourselves. I hope that you will give us some face and allow the two of us to deal with them.”

# Chapter 566: A Full Display Of Might (One)

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Upon hearing that Jian Chen was the one in the eighth booth that stole the Class 5 Monster Core, Kaizer's eyes grew even darker. With clenched teeth, he spat, "So even now you refuse to stand down from my Harido Clan. Hmph, yet another sin to add onto your unforgivable crimes." Turning to the head of the Heiming clan, Kaizer cupped his hands together, "My apologies, but this is a matter that my Harido clan must take care of. I hope that you will turn this matter over to me. Rest assured, my Harido clan will definitely take vengeance for your clan."

A white-robed man with an unordinary air to him walked out from the crowd with a smile, "Kaizer, this one is rather skeptical and hopes that you will provide an explanation about why you hold such a deep hatred for this person. Even if it is what happened with the auction, your hatred for such a person shouldn't be as deep as this."

This middle-aged man was a figure that even Ankhs and Kaizer would not offend on a whim. He was the head of the Feng family, another major party of the Blue Wind Kingdom that rivaled the Harido clan in power.

Ankhs looked to Kaizer, for only he could answer that question. Hesitating for a moment, Kaizer replied, "Master Feng, this matter involves an event from many years ago that involved the interest of my clan. Please forgive me for not finding this an appropriate place to explain my hatred."

"What could it possibly be for you to not say it here? Kaizer, I,

Ying Changkong feel quite curious on this matter as well. Just what in the world did this brother do to offend you for you to hate him to the death?” Another voice could be heard from behind as the Spirithawk Mercenaries walked out of the auction house with their captain leading the group.

Kaizer’s face darkened, but he said nothing in response.

The head of the Feng family looked to Dugu Feng with a small smile. “I believe everyone here saw you mistake this brother here for Wu Yun from two years ago. Furthermore, you even charged at him and demanded for him to hand over his battle skill. Perhaps Wu Yun has a battle skill that your Harido clan has taken a liking to?”

The words of the head of the Feng family caused Kaizer’s face to twitch. “Master Feng, without concrete evidence, please do not make random accusations.” Kaizer knew that if a Saint Master was capable of slaughtering several Great Saint Masters, then the battle skill would have to be an Earth Tier one at the very least. If news of that were to escape, then practically every single expert within the Blue Wind Kingdom would be in an uproar and fight for such a battle skill. If a faction with a Heaven Saint Master were to interfere, then the Harido clan would have to sit idly on the side.

Within the scope of the Blue Wind Kingdom, an Earth Tier Battle Skill was something that every powerful faction would deem highly important. Even the Heaven Saint Masters within the kingdom would have an Earth Tier Battle Skill as their strongest skill.

Laughing, the head of the Feng family looked to Jian Chen, “My brother, was what I said true or not?”

Jian Chen displayed a rather meaningful smile on his face as he replied, “Correct, two years ago Yan Kaizer of the Harido clan saw that I had a battle skill, and set out to kill me in order to obtain it for his own clan.”

Jian Chen’s words caused Kaizer’s face to grow even darker. It was now that he knew that this matter with the battle skill was no longer as secretive as he would like. With so many people from so many powerful factions gathered here, even he wouldn’t be able to kill them all to maintain the secret even if he wanted to.

“Little brother, I don’t know what battle skill it is that you have, but if it can make even the Harido clan drool at the mouth for it, it can’t be a low one at all.” Ying Changkong spoke with a serious expression as if concerned.

Everyone there could already imagine that such a battle skill enough for the Harido clan to covet it surely had to be a very qualitative one. Such a realization had been enough to ignite the burning greed within everyone’s heart as they began to covet it as well.

Seeing the avaricious glint in everyone’s eyes, Jian Chen gave a disdainful sneer as he wrapped his hands in front of his chest. “My battle skill is a High Earth Tier Battle Skill.”

As if a bombshell had gone off, everyone was startled to hear that



it was a High Earth Tier Battle Skill. Shortly after that news was revealed, the breathing of everyone there had grown progressively more coarse as they stared at Jian Chen with drool practically leaking from their mouths. A battle skill like that would be considered as one of the strongest within the Blue Wind Kingdom.

The expression on Kaizer's face drastically changed almost like he was filled with regret. If he had known that Jian Chen possessed a High Earth Tier Battle Skill, then he would have done his best to ensure that Jian Chen wouldn't have been able to say a word. Now that news had made its way out, there was no way that the strongest of the kingdom would remain uninvolved.

“Kaizer, why didn't you tell me about such an important thing earlier, you bastard! Now look what you've done, you leaked your own secret!” Ankhs howled furiously at Kaizer.

With the situation quickly spiraling out of his expectations, Kaizer was already filled with regret at his own impulsiveness. He shouldn't have mentioned the battle skill at all when Wu Yun had appeared.

“How unexpected that you possess a High Earth Tier Battle Skill, brother. I would never have suspected such an event like this. In our Blue Wind Kingdom, I'm afraid less than ten of those exist.” Ying Changkong boomed with laughter. There was a bright and warm look in his eyes; a High Earth Tier Battle Skill was enough to tempt any person.

Slowly schooling his emotions, the head of the Feng family spoke with sparkling eyes, “Brother, having such a battle skill like that

would be a burden to you. It would be undoubtedly dangerous to continue on in such a manner, but I have a particularly problem-free method of solving that. My Feng family has a decent relationship with the strongest sect within the Blue Wind Kingdom, the Ziji sect. Why not sell it to them? They will guarantee your wellbeing. In the case that you have the Ziji sect supporting you, then no one within the Blue Wind Kingdom would dare try to cause trouble for you. Give it some thought.”

“The master is correct. Young brother, the Ziji sect is very strong and has a Heaven Saint Master presiding over it. Within the Blue Wind Kingdom, they are most likely the strongest group. If they are behind you, then none of the other smaller factions would dare cause trouble with you. This is something that you wouldn’t even have to worry about being taken advantage of.” An elder that had been standing right next to the head of the Feng family spoke. His voice seemed meaningful and sincere as if completely worried about Jian Chen’s wellbeing.

Kaizer’s and Ankhs’ faces turned to the color of pigskin in their anger and gloom. The Ziji sect was one of the strongest factions within the kingdom, and were connected with the royal family themselves. Such a power was not one that the Harido clan could easily scale up against. Even if the Harido clan’s ancestor managed to breakthrough to become a Heaven Saint Master, they would still not be able to stand up to the Ziji sect.

Not only was the Ziji sect far more powerful and richer than the Harido clan, but the Heaven Saint Master was an established individual with plenty of power.

Everyone else had been startled to hear mention of the Ziji sect as well. Each one of them sighed as they realized that if Jian Chen were to seek asylum with the Ziji sect, then they would lose this chance of earning such a strong battle skill.

Jian Chen smiled, “I thank you for your kind intentions, but the High Earth Tier Battle Skill doesn’t require any protections. There is no need for lord Feng to worry.”

The expression on the man’s face grew taut as he replied in concern, “Young brother, you must think this through carefully. An Earth Tier Battle Skill is extremely precious. Without the Ziji sect to safeguard you, a multitude of troubles will surely come your way. Your life could very well be at stake here.” The head of the Feng family had wished that this person would allow himself to hand over the battle skill to the Ziji sect. If that were to be done, then the Ziji sect would undoubtedly see the Feng family in a better light, and this matter would help serve to bridge the gap between the two factions.

Without hesitation, Jian Chen shook his head, “This is a problem that doesn’t require your concern. Whatever small problems come my way will be dealt with by my people.”

Seeing Jian Chen decline the offer to be protected by the Ziji sect, was met with the sparkling eyes of everyone around him. Each one of them felt their hopes reignite within their hearts as they realized that this was yet another chance to take the battle skill. If they were the ones to hand over the battle skill to the powerful factions, then they would gain benefits as well as being able to copy down the battle skill for themselves first.

“Wu Yun, you killed many men from my Youlan clan two years ago. How do you plan to explain that?” The head of the Youlan clan accused. Thinking back to their previous grievances, he was prepared to fight for the battle skill.

“You’ve killed plenty of men from my Heiming clan as well as harming my dear son grievously. I will not allow my clan to stand idly by the side and watch.” The head of the Heiming clan spoke.

“There is also my Yang sect. Two years ago, my sect fell prey to your hands. Today, this debt of ours will be wiped clean with your blood.”

“There is also my Tianmu clan...”

Two factions that had been involved with Jian Chen had begun to announce their own grievances with him one after another. With everyone taking advantage of the situation to advance their own agendas, they were planning to use what had transpired two years ago in order to try and obtain the Earth Tier Battle Skill.

As for the ones who had traveled to the city from far away, they only stood by the sidelines in silence as they observed the situation unfold in front of them.

With everyone throwing their lot with the people who held grievances, Kaizer knew that there was no time to waste. Otherwise, something else might possibly happen to alter the situation once more. With no time to spare, he clutched his

hammer and flew at Jian Chen with a cry, “Wu Yun, we may as well settle our debts here and now.”

The same time Kaizer had moved, Dugu Feng had moved into action as well. With a bright-red sword of fire, he moved without hesitation to slash down onto Kaizer.

Sensing the strangeness of the situation behind him, Kaizer’s face darkened as he whirled around, and used his hammer to block the incoming sword strike.

With the two Saint Weapons making contact, there was a tremendous surge of Saint Force. It rippled and destroyed the streets as the energy washed over the ground. A single strike later, Kaizer was sent flying back three steps worth of distance while Dugu Feng stood in his original position without shaking at all.

The one at a disadvantage was already clear to see.

# Chapter 567: A Full Display Of Might (Two)

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There was a grim expression on Kaizer's face as he stared aghast at Dugu Feng. The fact that Dugu Feng was an Earth Saint Master was surprising enough, but he didn't think that Dugu Feng would also be stronger than him by a decent amount.

"Sire, what is the meaning of this? If it is for my earlier slight, this old man has already apologized to you, or was that not to your satisfaction?" Kaizer asked with a dark tone. Dugu Feng's strength was stronger than his own, causing him to feel slightly worried. A person like this was not to be fought against unless there was no other choice.

Still clutching the flame sword, Dugu Feng stared expressionlessly at Kaizer. His eyes were brilliantly cold, but he did not speak a single word. Instead, he slowly walked toward Jian Chen's group in front of everyone's wide open eyes, and stood resolutely right behind him.

Now that they were greeted with such a sight, everyone had come to the startling realization that the two of them were of the same group.

There was a very uncomfortable look on Kaizer's face as he connected the dots between the person he apologized to and Wu Yun. An extremely embarrassed look crept onto his face as he suddenly felt like palming his own forehead.

"I didn't think that you two would be working together. Wu Yun,

you have some stuff to you if you were able to bring an Earth Saint Master into your fold, but if you think a single one would be able to intimidate me, you are simply far too naive.” Kaizer spoke with clenched teeth.

Staring at Kaizer as if he was beneath him, Jian Chen sneered, “Who is the naive one I wonder. You’ll find out soon enough. Yan Kaizer, I will settle this two year debt of ours today.”

“Haha, that much is right. We will settle it once and for all. Not once have I ever thought that you would escape after being pushed down that cliff, but here you stand in front of me two years later. You must hate me tremendously for what happened that year, so I, Kaizer, will offer you a fair match. But the people here are too many for my liking. Why don’t we go outside to settle this?” Kaizer smiled coldly in return. Now that the battle skill had been revealed, everyone was waiting for a chance to snatch it from Jian Chen. With the way things were now, the best way to grab ahold of it would be to wait until Jian Chen was dead or beaten, and then take the battle skill from his body. If there were no battle skills to be found, then he could still be taken home and interrogated.

As a result, every single party here with a grudge against Jian Chen were fighting each other to be the first to announce their grudges. These announcements were in fear that someone else would take advantage and fight Jian Chen first for his battle skill. Fighting him in a fair battle and obtaining the battle skill after his defeat was what everyone planned on doing, Kaizer included.

Jian Chen gave a light shake of his head to decline Kaizer’s suggestion. “This place will do — it’s a large enough area. I’ve not

enough time to waste going with you to run off to some place.” Staring coldly at everyone else around him, Jian Chen smiled, “Two years ago, I became an enemy to plenty of people here. So, now whomever has a grudge stand forward. We will sever that grudge here and now.”

“Brat, you’re being impudent. Don’t think that because you hired an Earth Saint Master to help resolve your matters you’ll be able to get away. You killed plenty of people from the three major clans of Fengyang City, not a single one of our clans will ever forgive you for that.” Another three people distinguished themselves from the crowd as the three major clan heads of the city.

In this current moment, the representatives of the three major clans had stepped in front of Jian Chen as the ones that would fight him. Only the lord of the city was left standing behind in silence.

Sweeping his eyes around the place, Jian Chen asked in a calm manner, “Who else bears a grudge with me or desires my Earth Tier Battle Skill? Step forth now.” By his last phrase, Jian Chen’s voice had grown progressively colder.

“Wu Yun, you rampant bastard. Do you think yourself to be a Heaven Saint Master? Even with so many of us here, you’d still dare to act in such a presumptuous manner? Do you mean to ignore us as if our existence isn’t even worth noticing then?!” One of the middle-aged men growled. With three of the major clans of Fengyang City and the two members from the Harido clan, there were already five Earth Saint Masters gathered in opposition. The very notion that Jian Chen dared to act in such a manner against



five Earth Saint Masters angered them all greatly. Such an action was clearly disregarding their power, and for people that enjoyed the respect others gave them, this was an unbearable action.

The tiger cub sat quietly in its spot in Jian Chen's robes. Both of its eyes were filled with an intelligent light. It glanced around the place filled with curiosity. Affectionately rubbing the fur of the tiger cub, Jian Chen gave a smile that felt more cold than it was warm, "Those with no business here should stand down or risk injury. Ming Dong, Dugu Feng, whomever stands against us, slaughter them."

Without a word, Dugu Feng flew forward with fire billowing from his flaming sword as he hefted it into the air. In an instant, he had already flew toward the Great Saint Masters, and aimed his sword at their chests to successfully bisect some of them in half.

Ming Dong had not hesitated either. As soon as Jian Chen gave his commands, Ming Dong took out his own Saint Weapon, and transformed into an azure light that flew off with unbelievable speed toward Kaizer. Throughout his actions, there had been an intense killing intent within the eyes of Ming Dong.

The sudden actions of the two men had caused a war to form between both sides, which forced the surrounding bystanders to quickly run back a few steps. This was to avoid being caught in the battle by accident.

As a user of wind Saint Force, Ming Dong was extremely fast. All Kaizer himself could see was a blur of azure light before a single longsword appeared right in front of his chest. In his panic and

shock, Kaizer brought his hammer up to narrowly defend himself against the sword stroke.

“Bang!”

The accumulated energy within Ming Dong’s sword burst forth upon impact with Kaizer’s hammer in a far larger scale than what had exploded from Kaizer’s weapon. Consequently, Kaizer was sent flying into the air before landing on the ground roughly twenty meters away. His feet stumbled one after another as he tried to stabilize himself. It had taken another ten or so meters before he was finally able to stop himself from falling over. Whenever he had stepped on the ground to stop himself, cracks had formed from the amount of force he had used — one area of marble had been reduced to dust.

“B... but how can this be? Yo-you’re a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master.” Kaizer gasped in shock at the youthful face of Ming Dong. He couldn’t believe what he had experienced, and was having a small panic attack within his heart. His face rapidly paled as he properly registered the strength of the youth. His strength was practically on the same level of strength as the head of the Harido clan.

From the very beginning, Ming Dong had hid his strength so that no one that looked at him would know that he was an Earth Saint Master. Now that he had begun to fight, the strength that he was hiding had finally been revealed. This reveal had been world-shaking to everyone who had initially thought him to be a mere Great Saint Master, and many of them still couldn’t quite believe it when they looked again at how young he was.

The head of the Feng family had been surprised as well to see Ming Dong's strength. "It's no wonder; if that youth is a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master, then there is no question about why Wu Yun was so calm in such a situation. If he can rely on a figure like that, then no faction here would be able to last against a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master."

The headmaster of the Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion rejoiced to himself in secret as well, "I had no idea that Wu Yun would have someone as strong as him. Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Masters are very rare in the Blue Wind Kingdom; all it takes is a single step more to become a Heaven Saint Master. It's a good thing I did not step into this affair as well, or else I could have very well died here today."

The vice-headmaster was gleeful as well, "Headmaster, you are truly wise beyond belief. Our pavilion has escaped this calamity in one piece."

"We should step back a bit and watch how these three clans will survive this ordeal. A Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master stands a very good chance against five Earth Saint Masters. If he holds a battle skill, then..." The Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion headmaster sighed and spoke no more. There wasn't a need to finish his sentence for anyone to understand.

The surrounding crowd had given a large space for the group in the middle to fight it out. The appearance of a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master symbolized a truly powerful force that everyone greatly feared. Even the major factions of a First Class City wouldn't dare offend such a figure.

# Chapter 568: A Full Display Of Might (Three)

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A short amount of time later, Dugu Feng had managed to kill nearly a dozen Great Saint Masters and Saint Masters before finally being stalled by the three Earth Saint Masters from the three major clans of Fengyang City. They started a fierce battle in the middle of the streets, and whenever both sides clashed against one another, tremendous surges of energy wash over the surrounding area in every direction. The nearby buildings that were struck by the waves of energy suffered tremendous amounts of damages as a result.

Even the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House had not escaped disaster. The giant doors had been unable to endure the surge of energy that struck it. It shook endlessly. Dust fell to the ground as fractures formed everywhere nearby.

The battle between the Earth Saint Masters had gotten progressively more intense, forcing the audience to take yet another few steps back to guarantee their safety. A wide open area had been left behind for the two sides to battle it out, but the men of weaker strengths had still been slightly injured by the whiplash of energy that exploded from the battle.

Ming Dong's current focus was entirely on Kaizer. With each strike, he would force back Kaizer step by step without any hesitation in his movements. Taking advantage of any opening, he would draw close to Kaizer with blinding speed. His own longsword would every so often strike at Kaizer's chest with an astounding amount of energy.

Kaizer was merely a First Cycle Earth Saint Master in strength — a ranking that was vastly inferior to a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master. Just before he could recover his footing after the previous strike, Ming Dong had suddenly reappeared right in front of him. With a ruthless stab of his sword, Ming Dong pierced straight through Kaizer's chest.

The pain from the stab had forced Kaizer to let out a muffled grunt of pain as blood drained from his face. Overwhelmed with shock as he looked at Ming Dong, the youth gave Kaizer a sensation of fear that was far stronger than what the head of the Harido clan gave him.

A merciless smile appeared on Ming Dong's face as he watched Kaizer's reaction. Without giving him anytime to react further than that, Ming Dong began to inject his Saint Force through his sword and into Kaizer's chest. Directly infiltrating his body, the Saint Force instantly began to destroy his internal organs.

"Aaaah~~" A wretched scream of pain emerged from Kaizer's mouth as his face contorted in pain. The destruction of his internal organs had given him such anguish, and the pain from the longsword piercing his chest had been far more than he could possibly endure in silence.

After a short bout of battle, Ming Dong had grievously injured an Earth Saint Master to the point that the opposing party was unable to continue battling. Such a success was so astonishing that the spectators were rendered speechless for half a day.

An Earth Saint Master was the strongest position held in

Fengyang City due to there only being a trifling amount of them. For the rest of the city, an Earth Saint Master was a tree one could never hope to scale. Thus, everyone felt a tremendous shock when they watched such a strong individual be treated so weakly.

“Kaizer!” Ankhs cried out. It hadn’t even been several seconds since Kaizer’s battle with Ming Dong had started, and Ankhs didn’t think that Ming Dong would be as strong as he was. Within two exchanges, he had beaten the Earth Saint Master Kaizer into submission.

Without anymore hesitation, Ankhs took out his own Saint Weapon to charge at Ming Dong to see if he could stop Ming Dong and save Kaizer. Despite the fact that he was more than aware that his opponent was a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master, now was not the time to be afraid.

There had been a flash of killing intent once more in Ming Dong’s eyes when he saw Ankhs come charging at him. With a sneer, Ming Dong flickered out of sight and then reappeared right in front of Ankhs with his longsword stabbing outwards.

Ankhs was stronger than Kaizer by a decent amount since he was a Second Cycle Earth Saint Master. This meant that there was still a very substantial difference between the two, but he would still be completely dominated by Ming Dong. Under the assault of Ming Dong, Ankhs found himself unable to do anything but defend.

“Sire, I have no idea what great price Wu Yun has offered for you to risk offending my Harido clan, but as long as you don’t interfere any longer, my Harido clan will offer you just as much Wu Yun has

offered you. There is no worth to making an enemy out of my Harido clan; the ancestor of our clan is on the verge of becoming a Heaven Saint Master and turning our clan into one of the best clans in the Blue Wind Kingdom. Why not exchange our weapons of war for banners of silk instead? We can kill Wu Yun together and plunder the battle skill for both of us.” Ankhs cried out. He knew that he wasn’t a match for Ming Dong. Therefore, he could only hope to deter and tempt him with the might of the Harido clan so that some fear or greed might take hold in his opponent’s heart.

There was no way that Ankhs would know just how deep the relationship between Jian Chen and Ming Dong was. His words here were completely useless and only served to anger Ming Dong even more.

“Your words are enough for me to wish to kill you today at all costs!” Ming Dong spoke with an icy tone. Unbridled fury could be seen in his eyes and the sword in his hand increased in strength.

With Ming Dong fighting with his all, the pressure on Ankhs tremendously increased. With three weak exchanges, Ankhs arm was lopped off by Ming Dong.

“Ah!” With one of his arms severed, Ankhs let out a miserable howl that spread throughout the area with a hair-raising sound; this was what an Earth Saint Master sounded like when in pain.

The intense pain had dulled Ankh’s nerves and reactions as a result, causing his reaction speed to take a tremendous drop. While he was trying to control the pain, a flash of azure light blurred past

his eyes, and in the next moment, Ankhs had lost all feeling he had in his body. His pain-filled cries had stopped as well.

One could only see his head separate from his body in a high arc. Spinning two meters into the air, it came flying down with blood sprinkling the entire area.

The bystanders could only watch with eyes wide open in shock as they watched the spectacle in disbelief. None of them had imagined that in the short period of time this battle had taken place, an Earth Saint Master would fall so easily and in such a miserable state. His entire head had been decapitated from his body so that he wouldn't even pass on to the next life with a whole body. Even the visitors from the First Class City couldn't believe their eyes at what they saw.

Having witnessed an Earth Saint Master fall in such a manner was a tremendous attack on the perspective people had about Earth Saint Masters.

On the other hand, the three Earth Saint Masters fighting with Dugu Feng had been subjected to shock as well. They were quick to regain their wits before glancing at each other. With a knowing nod to one another, they abandoned their fight with Dugu Feng and flew toward Jian Chen and You Yue in an attempt to pressure both Ming Dong and Dugu Feng.

Seeing that the three men weren't even trying to escape and were instead running for Jian Chen, Ming Dong and Dugu Feng finally cracked open a mocking smile. Not even moving to stop them, the two of them charged toward the others that had took a step



forward earlier, for they had been ordered by Jian Chen to slay whoever came forward.

Emotionless for a brief moment, Jian Chen watched the three Earth Saint Masters run at him as a cold sneer that gradually made its way on his face. Lifting his finger, three rays of Sword Qi extended from his fingertips and shot toward the three enemies.

Caught off guard, the three of them were stabbed straight through their chests. The Sword Qi remained within their chests, causing havoc with their internal organs and destroying them.

Suffering such a tremendous amount of damage, the three men came to a grinding stop as their faces completely drained of color. Some blood flew out of their mouths. Sensing that their internal organs had been destroyed by Sword Qi, they each had a look of despair appear on their faces. The destruction of their internal organs wasn't enough to kill them immediately, but they would die nonetheless. Unless an extremely advanced Radiant Saint Master was on hand to heal them, they would die. Within Fengyang City, there was no such Radiant Saint Master to help them.

Soon after the Earth Saint Masters fell, the rest of the remaining Great Saint Masters had been rendered defenseless by Ming Dong and Dugu Feng. By their hands, dozens of men had been killed and the streets had been dyed with their blood.

The three Earth Saint Master were left kneeling on the ground as the remaining amount of blood in their bodies had begun to drain. Shock filled their entire system as they each looked up to Jian Chen unconvinced that this had truly happened to them. Not a

single one of them would have possibly imagined that Jian Chen's strength was even more terrifying than the two Earth Saint Masters helping him. None of the three had even seen what those three rays of light were.

Ming Dong forced the grievously injured Kaizer to kneel in front of Jian Chen, "Brother, what do you plan to do with him?"

Ashen with defeat, Kaizer knew that using the Harido clan to intimidate Jian Chen was useless since Jian Chen himself possessed a strength that wouldn't need to fear the Harido clan.

Staring frostily at Kaizer, Jian Chen smiled, "Yan Kaizer, here we stand today with our debts from two years ago complete. Your Harido clan and the three major clans of Fengyang City not only tried to take what is mine, but you even tried to make me a prisoner. I have never forgotten this debt for the past two years, and now today it is finally over.

Yan Kaizer slowly lifted his head to look at Jian Chen's young face. Kaizer's face was very terrifying to see since it lacked blood because of the severe wounds he had sustained.

"If I had known about this day earlier, then I would have chased down that cliff to make sure you really died." Kaizer spoke with clenched teeth.

"Do you wish to die!" Ming Dong barked furiously and slammed a fist against Kaizer's head, causing the skin of his head to spill blood.

There was a frosty light in Jian Chen's eyes as he smiled. "It's unfortunate the world doesn't have medicine for regret. Time cannot flow backwards either; no roads are left open for you anymore." Having said that, Jian Chen waved his hand, "Kill him!"

Without hesitation, a blade of wind Saint Force materialized in Ming Dong's hand before he ruthlessly slammed it into Kaizer's head. With the Saint Force entering his head, Kaizer's soul was destroyed.

With nary a grunt or sound, Kaizer's body weakly dropped to the ground, following the footsteps of Ankhs.

Turning to the three Earth Saint Masters of the major clans of Fengyang City, Jian Chen revealed a smile that didn't quite reach his eyes, "Now. Wouldn't the three of you say that I still have a debt to finish with you three as well?"

# Chapter 569: The End Of Vengeance

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The three Earth Saint Masters of Fengyang City were representatives of the three major clans. When they heard what Jian Chen said, they could only look up at him. “Our internal organs are gone; there is no chance of us living for much longer. Whether you kill us or torture us, there is no need for you to say anything more.”

Smiling, Jian Chen replied, “You cannot blame me for your current state of being. You can only blame your own avarice. Everything that happened today was from you seeking trouble with me and no one else.”

“Hmph, the only regret I have is that my strength was not enough. Otherwise, the one kneeling on the ground today would have been you and not us.” One of them spat. They had all thrown caution to wind. There was no need to fear Jian Chen any longer since they were all dead men walking.

Jian Chen nodded his head, “Yes, there is nothing wrong with what you say. If I were weaker than you three, then the one kneeling here would perhaps be me. In this world, it goes without saying that power is equal to might.” With that, Jian Chen turned back to look at Tie Ta. He was stone-faced as stood before the bloody streets filled with corpses.

Tie Ta was no stranger to blood and gore, but that was only when magical beasts were involved. Streets filled with the corpses of humans was a first for him however. As such, it had been a situation his heart found hard to stomach.

Jian Chen sighed. With Tie Ta's straightforward attitude, it would take a decent amount of time for him to adjust to the Tian Yuan Continent and how it worked.

Finally, Jian Chen turned back to look at the three clan heads, "From today on, Fengyang City will no longer have your three clans. To alleviate you of your pains, I will send you off." There were many clans within Fengyang City. The power of their clans would quickly transfer with the deaths of the three Earth Saint Masters.

Gently lifting his right hand, Jian Chen shot forth three bright rays of azure and violet Sword Qi from his finger. The three rays of Sword Qi quickly embedded themselves into the heads of each person and extinguished their spirits. Even a Heaven Saint Master wouldn't be able to survive such a stroke.

The bodies of the three clan heads collapsed to the ground as if their strings had been cut. In a few seconds, the four Earth Saint Masters of Fangyang City had been reduced to a single one. Only the lord of the city was left alive.

From his position far away from the situation, the lord of Fengyang grieved as he watched the three Earth Saint Masters killed. Now that they had died, the might of Fengyang City had decreased by a substantial amount. Everything that had happened was something he would have to accept. He didn't have the power to change it after all.

He had not spoken a single word. Even though three major power holders had been killed, he didn't dare mention a word about it. Jian Chen and the group of people with him had already displayed a tremendous amount of power that would meet no resistance from the lord of Fengyang City. Thus, he remained silent without even thinking about making a move.

The fact that Jian Chen had killed three Earth Saint Masters with a lift of his finger was an extremely jaw-dropping experience to those who witnessed it. It was so utterly inconceivable and mind-boggling that they couldn't help but look at Jian Chen in a radically different light. Originally, they had all thought that Jian Chen would be as strong as he was two years ago, and that there wouldn't be any major changes since then. Even if he was a talented genius, becoming a Great Saint Master would be an outstanding feat, but becoming an Earth Saint Master was just impossible since Jian Chen looked far too young.

Suddenly, everyone in the audience realized the reason why Jian Chen had been so calm in front of the Harido clan and the three major clan heads. It was not because he could rely on the Earth Saint Masters, Ming Dong and Dugu Feng. The real reason was his own strength was so terrifyingly strong that there wasn't a need for him to make a move himself.

The visitors that had come from some of the First Class Cities regarded him with serious eyes, but everyone else felt sweat on their foreheads. Their hearts were wildly pounding. When they had learned that he possessed a battle skill, they had been filled with greed and couldn't help but decide to stick their hands into the pot. With a convenient excuse and with the Harido and the three major clans providing support, they had felt more than ready

at first.

Now that they were fully aware Jian Chen's strength Jian Chen, everyone could only feel a deep amount of sorrow and regret. Some felt overjoyed that they did not speak out at first; otherwise, they would be yet another casualty lying on the ground.

Looking around, Jian Chen's eyes hovered on the group from the Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion for a moment before turning away. The group had been extremely nervous when their eyes met. They had felt true fear in that moment, worried that Jian Chen would start trouble with them next. If he could kill an Earth Saint Master without a problem, then the Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion would have no chance of defending themselves.

Jian Chen displayed a smile on his face as he looked around. "The ones that wanted to plunder my items from me in the past can't possibly be this few. If there is still something anyone wishes to take from me, by all means step forward."

Not even a cricket made a sound from the crowd.

Eventually, a white-robed elder with equally white hair came walking forward with clasped hands. "Esteemed hero, I am the headmaster of the Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion. I represent the Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion when I offer my utmost apologies for what happened two years ago. I hope someone as great as you are will forgive and forget the offenses from such a lowly power. My Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion may be a third-rate power, but should there be anything we can do, then by all means instruct us as you see fit. I swear that the Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion will

do as you say faithfully.” The headmaster spoke in a very honest and humble manner as he offered his apologies to Jian Chen. He was more than aware that this was the only way of guaranteeing the survival of the Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion.

The ones that had chased Jian Chen around the city two years ago had been killed by Ming Dong and Dugu Feng. The three major clans, the Youlan clan, and the Mutian family were as good as gone. From the crowd, the Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion was the only remaining power left.

Seeing how magnanimous and apologetic the headmaster had been and remembering how the Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion hadn't done a thing to him in the past, Jian Chen had no reason to be petty to them, “I, Jian Chen, may have a grudge against many, but I am not a narrow-minded man. If the headmaster is sincere in his apologies, then I will not stop you.”

As if granted a tremendous pardon, the group from the Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion's faces brightly lit up.

“Many thanks for your favor. My Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion cannot thank you enough for choosing to spare us. Whatever you need, it would be our honor to do it for you.” The headmaster gracefully responded. Having seen the gigantic power Jian Chen wielded, the headmaster had nearly sworned allegiance to him.

Jian Chen could tell what the headmaster was feeling from his voice, but he said nothing about it. The Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion was an inferior power within the kingdom without a single Earth Saint Master to their name. A power like that was did



not even need to be looked at.

“Dugu Feng, go and bring back the money obtained from selling the two Class 5 Monster Cores.” Jian Chen commanded Dugu Feng.

Dugu Feng gave a nod of his head before walking into the auction house without a sound. Ming Dong took the Space Rings the five Earth Saint Masters wore. In total, he had obtained three Space Rings and two Space Belts.

When Ming Dong took out five gleaming purple cards, he revealed a huge smile on his face, “With these five purple cards, there has to be at least several hundred thousand purple coins. Hehe, now I am a rich man too.”

Jian Chen couldn't help but force a smile when he heard what Ming Dong said. A Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master lacking money was certainly a very strange occurrence.

Not too long later, Dugu Feng came back out with the profits he had earned from selling the two Class 5 Monster Cores. Then along with Jian Chen, he and the others left the scarred up area.

Yullian could be seen standing on a balcony in the auction hall where she could clearly look over the situation.

“I didn't think that the Wu Yun, who was chased mercilessly from two years ago, would make such a triumphant return. Not only did he kill two Earth Saint Masters from the Harido clan, he

was also able to kill the three Earth Saint Masters from the three major clans. This must be his retribution.” Yullian muttered to herself as she stared at Jian Chen. Then turning back to look at the ruined gates of the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House, she revealed a pained look on her face, “Looks like a good amount of our profit today will be going to fix that.”

When the surrounding audience saw Jian Chen’s group starting to walk away, the ones that were in his immediate path had quickly moved to get out of his way.

When Jian Chen’s shadow finally disappeared from sight, noise returned to the area in the form of a huge clamor. Three of the strongest four people of Fengyang City had been killed. That alone was a heaven-shaking source of information.

“I didn’t think that the brothers in the eighth booth would be that strong. I made a mistake in judgement it seems.” The captain of the Spirithawk Mercenaries sighed. No one could have possibly imagined that the youths that he had been chatting with earlier would be so strong; it was unbelievable to the utmost degree.

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Not too long after Jian Chen’s group returned to their inns to rest, news about the heads of the three major clans in the city made its way around. Such a tremendous piece of information lead to an equally large reaction, leaving everyone who heard it stunned in disbelief.

# Chapter 570: The Change In The Yun Family

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News of the what had transpired inside and outside the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House quickly made its way to head of the Yun Family. When he heard that the head of the Heiming clan had been killed, he was stupefied.

“But how? How is this possible? Not only was the head of the Heiming clan killed, the heads of the other two major clans were killed as well. They were all Earth Saint Masters though!” The head of the Yun family muttered in dismay. It was very hard for him to believe this recent bit of information, and his heart was still finding it very shocking even now.

A young woman wearing a red skirt walked into the room with a look of discomfort on her face. “Father, I’ve just heard that the heads of the three major clans were killed off, is that true?”

“It’s drivel. That’s what it is. The three of them were all Earth Saint Masters. Who in Fengyang City could possibly kill all three of them? It has to be false. Men! Go out and investigate the truth behind this matter and report back to me.” The head of the Yun family boomed with an irritated command.

“Yes, my lord. Your subordinate will go make the inquiries straight away.” The guard stationed in the room immediately ran off to verify the reports.

It did not take long for the man to come back to give his report. With a frightened face, he said, “ My lord, the news was not

falsified at all. The heads of the three major clans have all been killed. Their bodies litter the streets next to the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House! Many other experts were killed as well!”

Thunderstruck by this disastrous turn of events, the head of the Yun family had originally took the news to be a rumor and didn't believe it. Now hearing the news from the mouth of his subordinate left him with no other choice but to believe it. Despite it being hard to stomach, he simply couldn't deny it any longer.

“Is that true? Did you personally see the corpses of the three heads?” Lord Yun's hands clasped tightly onto the soldier's shoulders as if trying to choke out the truth.

“Y-yes my lord. It is absolutely true. Your servant personally bore witness to the three corpses. There is no way this is not true.” The soldier spoke in alarm. Now that three major individuals of Fengyang City were dead, the soldier didn't know what to think. This was as unexpected as a bolt of lightning from clear skies.

Dazed, the lord broke away from the soldier with an absent-minded look. His Yun family was indeed a power within Fengyang City, but there were still plenty of other parties and mercenary groups that were stronger than him. The Yun family as it was was a party that was better kept under the table than on top. He had originally planned for his family to tie themselves to the Heiming clan to give them some semblance of power. The betrothment between the two powers had already been prepared; all they had to do was wait for the marriage. Then the Yun family would skyrocket in power.

However, the Yun family would be equally struck by this disastrous turn of events that befell the Heiming clan with all their Earth Saint Masters being killed. The lord of the Yun family knew that if by chance the head Earth Saint Master was killed, then the Heiming clan would lose their status as one of the top three clans and drop by an abnormal amount. Their dreams of rising exponentially in power and status had been dashed, turning into nothing in a single stroke. In other words, the fall of the Heiming clan had meant the chance of the Yun family becoming successful significantly fell.

When the red-skirted woman heard that the Heiming clan had lost their leader, she was excited. For a moment, she hesitated before asking, “Father, now that the Heiming clan has lost their Earth Saint Master and a good amount of their stronger men, their power has fallen. The benefits we would gain by associating with them would be trivial. Do you think that we should annul the betrothment we have with them as well?”

“Belay that!” The lord immediately dashed the young woman’s hopes. “You may be right. The Heiming clan has lost their Earth Saint Master and are no longer as strong as before, but even as that stands, they hold a plethora of information about the inner workings of the city. No other power can match that. Our Yun family would still benefit from this marriage, so don’t go around dreaming of such an impractical reality.”

An unusual amount of frost had appeared within the woman’s eyes with those words, but the man did not notice the change.

The drastic turn of events had been a huge blow to the

development of the Yun family, giving the man a tremendous headache. Letting out a heavy sigh, the man walked to his desk, “Yun Lian, fetch your father a cup of tea!”

“Yes!” The young woman replied before moving to prepare a cup of tea for her father. Then standing behind her father, she began to dutifully give him a massage as expected from the offspring of a parent.

Bringing the cup up to his lips, the lord of the Yun family had only just taken a sip from his cup of tea when his daughter began to suddenly radiate murderous intent. A delicate-looking dagger slid into her hand before she ruthlessly stabbed it into the back of her father.

“Tzzk!” Under the unflinching hand of the woman, the dagger buried itself so deeply within the man that not even the blade could be seen.

The man let out a pained cry as the cup of tea in his hand fell to the table. He too was a man that practiced and cultivated Saint Force; consequently, he possessed a quick reaction speed. He immediately rose from his chair and backhanded the woman away. She flew across the room before slamming into the wall on the opposite side, but the damage had been done. With a mouthful of blood, the man knew that he had been seriously injured.

Pulling out the delicate dagger that had been embedded in his back, the man looked at his daughter in disbelief, “Yun Lian, what has gotten into you? What reason do you have to kill your own father?”

Staggering back up, the woman's eyes were flowing with tears as she stared hatefully at the head of the Yun family. Clenching her teeth, she angrily replied, "You don't deserve to be called my father! You are a murderer, the murderer of my mother! Don't think I don't know what you did with my mother. I will take revenge for her!"

Startled, the man threw down the dagger in his hand in outrage, "Yun Lian, have you gone mad? What in the world are you saying?"

By now, Yun Lian had lost all pretense of being the golden daughter she had been pretending to be. Letting out an angry shout, she said, "Yun Tian, don't you dare lie to me. Tell me how my mother died!"

With a serious expression, the man replied, "Did your mother not contract a serious illness?"

"You lie! Don't try to deceive me. I know all about what happened that very night. I was watching from a secret spot; my mother didn't die from any illness. It was you that beat her to death. You killed my mother. You are not my father!" She shrieked.

"What are you saying? Where did you see such a thing?" The man questioned, aghast at what she was saying.

Still staring hatefully at the man, the woman spat out the next

line with clenched teeth, “That’s right. You did something with my mother that night. From where I was hidden, I could see you beat mother to death!”

“My mother was a cultivator. She also owned an Earth Tier Battle Skill. She became a cripple because her Saint Weapon had been shattered. When you found out that mother had a battle skill, you wanted her to hand it over to you, but she refused! It was through your fists that you attempted to beat it out of her, but with her Saint Weapon gone and her weakened body, she was killed when you took the beating too far! I know everything, don’t even try to cheat your way out of this. You cannot lie to me. You have the face of a human, but the heart of a beast! By no means do you have the right to call yourself my father. Today is the day I will kill you to take revenge for my mother!”

A drastic change had overcome the man’s face now as he stared gravely at his daughter. “I didn’t realize that you had witnessed that night with such clarity. I’ve clearly underestimated you, especially if you were able to carry on for so many years with such a heavy heart without my detection. That in itself is worthy of being called my daughter. Yet, how do you plan on killing me with a single piece of cutlery? You haven’t condensed your Saint Weapon yet, nor are you a Saint. What means do you have to kill me?”

“You belittle me too much. There’s no way I’d believe so naively that I could kill you with a single knife. I smeared some poison on that dagger that I bought for a heavy price at the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House. The poison is a dangerous one that will escape even your senses. Yun Tian, you cannot escape death today. May you go to the underworld and be buried with my mother!” The woman let



out a cold laugh as she spat out her hatred for him.

“What? You’ve poisoned the dagger!?” The head of the Yun Family cried out with terror. Throwing himself at the woman, he roared, “Hand over the antidote at once!”

She had been prepared for such an action. The moment he had charged at her, she ran for the door and quickly disappeared from sight.

He had not given chase and instead stared venomously in the direction she had disappeared. Angrily, he said, “What a terrible brat to conspire to kill your father. You will not escape me!” From the middle of his room, he hurriedly took out a bottle filled with pills of antidote. He swallowed the pills to alleviate the poison or at least halt its current progress in his body.

After swallowing the antidote pills, the head of the Yun family stalked out of his room. Calling forth for his men, he and the hundred others immediately left the household right away.

# Chapter 571: The Battle Skill Heirloom Of The Bi Family

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Leaving with haste from the Yun family, the young woman rode her Class 1 Magical Beast mount at great speeds down the street. Her body was in a weaker state than before since she had been struck by the head of the family. She had received no major injuries, but she was not a Saint yet. Her body was not accustomed to taking such a blow; thus, it heavily impacted her condition, causing her face to pale.

“I want her captured! You unfilial daughter, who are you to try and kill your own father!?” The angry voice of her father exploded from behind. The fabric on his back was completely drenched in blood. He, along with several dozen soldiers, chased after her with great haste. They were unable to fly through the streets since they were congested, so they had trouble catching up to her. The Yun family didn’t have many magical beasts to begin with; therefore, many of the soldiers could only rely on their legs to run. Only the head of the Yun family and his most loyal soldiers rode a mount. Both groups blazed down the streets.

With both sides racing and crossing over several major streets, they managed to travel several kilometers away from the center of the city. By now, the father had already closed the distance from several hundred meters to just a few dozen.

Seeing that her father was gaining on her, the daughter knew that she wouldn’t be able to escape if this continued. With a moment’s hesitation, she immediately turned into a nearby alleyway.

“Wretched girl, don’t waste your energy! You cannot escape from me. Hurry up and hand over the antidote!” The father roared. His expression was panicked. He could tell the poison within his body was slowly coursing throughout it. The antidotes he had swallowed earlier weren’t able to counteract the poison. The only solution left was to find the actual antidote.

The woman completely ignored the words her father spat out. Urging her stead to run even faster, she finally came to a stop right in front of an inn. She threw herself down from the mount to run in. She knew that the person she was looking for was in this place.

When she ran into the inn, the head of the Yun family and the other soldiers immediately came to a stop by the entrance.

“Surround the inn and prevent that unfilial daughter of mine from escaping. You there, follow me in.” The man commanded before storming into the inn with his soldiers.

At the same time, Jian Chen and his group were gathered together within one of the rooms.

“Jian Chen, the three major clans of Fengyang City have lost plenty of their experts, but their clans still remain. Do you think we should eradicate their clans entirely? After how they treated you two years ago, our strength now would be more than enough to make sure they pay retribution. We shouldn’t let them off so easily, especially the Harido clan. Now that we’ve killed two of their Earth Saint Masters, they won’t take that matter lying down.

Even if they don't do anything now, they will, without a doubt, work against us in the future when the time is right. At the very least, we should cut off the Harido clan and burn the roots so that they will never rise up against us." Ming Dong proposed.

"Wouldn't that be too cruel? It was only a single person that offended Jian Chen, and he's dead now. Why should we involve their clan? They're innocent in this." Tie Ta blurted out.

Giving a thoughtful hum, Jian Chen replied, "That much is true. Burning the roots would prevent any future actions against us. The man that slighted me may be dead, but the hatred their clan possesses for me will not be so easily resolved. Since we've killed two of their stronger individuals, their hatred will be even deeper. Without a doubt they will bury their feelings and wait for a time to strike when optimal to do the most damage to us."

"If you think so, then we should take care of the Harido clan straight away after we leave Fengyang City." Ming Dong spoke.

"There's no need to rush. Our current task at hand is to further develop our strength and wait until the Flame Mercenaries have established a decent scope of control. Soon, even the Harido clan will ask to join the Flame Mercenaries." Jian Chen responded. He was very much aware of the fact that killing two individuals would give plenty of trouble for him in the future, so it was best to get rid of the source straight away.

Ming Dong hung his head in thought before realizing something, "Well then, how about this. Why don't we leave the Harido clan for now and have the Flame Mercenaries take care of them as

practice.”

“I have satisfied the grievances I had from my journey to this auction house two years ago. We should rest for the night and leave tomorrow morning for the next First Class City to gather some mercenaries.” Jian Chen replied.

“Fine then, we’ll return first. The Illusionary Flash is far too mysterious for me to comprehend in a single go anyways. Now that my level of comprehension has increased, I feel that I have a better chance of understanding it.” Ming Dong nodded his head as he stood up from his chair.

Jian Chen could only sigh when he heard him mention the Illusionary Flash. There was regret on his face. This battle skill had been profoundly deep, and was regretfully only usable with Saint Force. He was unable to use this battle skill since he had no Saint Force, nothing more could be said about that.

“I wonder just when I will be able to use the Chaotic Force, and if I’ll be able to use the Chaotic Force to use the Illusionary Flash.” Jian Chen thought to himself. He knew that it would be a long journey until he was able to use the Chaotic Force due to the difficulty of cultivating it. His only path as of now was to gather Ruler Armaments and absorb the energy within them to refine them into Chaotic Force. However, it would take a tremendous amount of time to accomplish such a task.

A single wisp of Chaotic Force was equivalent to the strength of a Saint Ruler. Even if he were to refine monster cores into Chaotic Force, it would take a sea of them for a single strand.

“Jian Chen, you should rest up as well. We’ll be taking our leave.” You Yue spoke softly to Jian Chen as they all stood up to leave.

As soon as Ming Dong opened the door, a bright-red blur shot into the room with staggering footsteps before collapsing to the floor.

Jian Chen and Ming Dong strangely looked at the sudden arrival that was this red-skirted young woman. At a glance, they recognized her as the young daughter of the Yun family from a week ago.

“Hey hey, what on earth are you doing barging into our rooms like that?” Ming Dong asked with bemusement.

When she stood back up onto her feet, her face was exuberantly pale and her hair had been frazzled from the wind. Such a disheveled figure like the one she had now was completely different than from the graceful figure she had back then.

The eyes of the young woman shot straight to Jian Chen with a hard to detect hint of panic and apprehension. Hesitating for only a fraction of a moment, she steeled her nerves and said, “My lords, I know that you are all very strong people. I have a matter that I hope that you will be able to help me with; if you help me destroy the Yun family, then I will repay you in kind with an Earth Tier Battle Skill.” Although she looked calm on the outside, her voice had betrayed the nervousness she felt in her heart.

Ming Dong observed the young woman with a pondering glance, “If I remember correctly, you’re the young daughter of the Yun family. How queer, the daughter of the Yun family asking us to eradicate the very same family. Just what type of herb did you mix together and take? You said you have an Earth Tier Battle Skill, how could we believe such a thing, or did you take us to be three year old children?”

Growing more anxious, she pressed on, “It doesn’t matter if you believe me or not. The battle skill I mention is true. As long as you help me destroy the Yun family, I will hand it over to you.”

“So I see, you wretched girl, you’ve been hiding secrets from me all this time!” Suddenly, a furious roar sounded from outside the room as the head of the Yun family and his strong-looking soldiers came into the room. His eyes landed upon Jian Chen and the others. While they all looked young to him, the man knew that they couldn’t be taken lightly if his daughter had spoken to them in such a manner.

“My lords, I am the lord of Fengyang City’s Yun family. This girl here has gone mad and tried to kill her own father. Her words cannot be trusted. Whatever Earth Tier Battle Skill it is, is something she fabricated and cannot be believed. I’ll be taking her back home. If we have bothered you with this scene, I give my utmost apologies.” The man politely explained to Jian Chen. It had only taken a moment for him to devise a plan on what to say. Ever since his daughter had spoken, he could already tell that the gathering of people in this room were not people he could afford to offend.

With that, the head of the Yun family turned to the soldiers outside the room. “What are you loafing around for? Hurry up and escort my daughter back home!”

“Yes!” The soldiers responded before moving to grab her.

As soon as their feet crossed into the room, Dugu Feng had immediately stepped forward to block them from entering. With an intimidating glare, he asked, “Out. Who said you could walk into this room as you please?”

Startled, the head of the Yun family was further convinced that these youths could not be offended at all costs. “Ye-yes. We will not enter the room without your express approval. If we may please implore you to allow us to escort my mad daughter home, we will avoid troubling you all any longer.”

Jian Chen’s eyes stared calmly at the young woman, “Miss, if you may please leave.”

Despair immediately overcame the young woman’s face. She knew that whether or not she would survive today was completely dependent on Jian Chen’s assistance. She knew that returning to the Yun family would mean eternal imprisonment for her now that her battle skill was known.

Pleading even harder now, she said, “I beg of you to help me. My Advance Earth Tier Battle Skill is yours in return.”



The head of the Yun family was ecstatic to hear that it was an Advance Earth Tier Battle Skill. Quickly schooling his emotions, he said, “Crazy girl! My lords, please ignore what my daughter is saying. She doesn’t have any battle skills at all; pay no attention to her.” He wanted nothing more than to rush up to stuff her mouth to prevent her from talking anymore, but Dugu Feng who was blocking the entryway had intimidated him into inaction.

“If you had an Earth Tier Battle Skill, then why didn’t you go seek out one of the other powers in Fengyang City to help do your bidding. I would imagine they would all be more than willing to help for an Earth Tier Battle Skill.” Jian Chen inquired.

“There was never a chance in the past, and I was never sure whether or not an Earth Tier Battle Skill would be enough to help me. Now that I am at my wits end, there is no other path to take. I beg of you to believe me. If you can help me, then I will impart my mother’s family’s battle skill, the Miracle Water of Bi. This is an invaluable battle skill I’m sure!” The woman desperately pleaded. The antidote was on her person. Hence, if she were to be captured and sent back home, then she would never be able to take revenge for her mother. Not only that, her own body would be endlessly tortured for the battle skill, and she had no doubts that her own father would go through any lengths to obtain it.

Upon mention of the battle skill, Jian Chen’s face revealed shock. His eyes immediately lit up with a bright glare as he shot straight up from his seat. Astonished, he honed straight on her as he questioned, “What did you say? The Miracle Water of Bi, is that right?” This battle skill had immediately brought forth a surge of emotions that he could not quell. It was by no means an unfamiliar

battle skill to him. In fact, it was the battle skill that was passed down from each person in the Bi family.

## Chapter 572: The Identity Of Bi Lian (One)

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Such a major reaction from Jian Chen caused everyone in the room to jump in surprise, especially the ones that knew Jian Chen most like Ming Dong, You Yue, and Dugu Feng. This was the very first time they had witnessed Jian Chen react in such a way, so they were all flabbergasted at his expression, especially since it was only an Earth Tier Battle Skill.

“Jian Chen, what’s wrong with this Miracle Water of Bi?” The limpid eyes of You Yue observed Jian Chen as she inquired with a soft voice. It was very melodic to hear, like the song of a song-bird.

Ming Dong and Dugu Feng looked at Jian Chen curiously as well. If a mere Earth Tier Battle Skill could illicit such a reaction from Jian Chen, then surely there was more to the Miracle Water of Bi than what they had initially thought.

They had not been the only ones that were shocked. Even the young woman herself had been startled by Jian Chen’s reaction. Dumbstruck, she could only stand there in ignorance, wondering what she had done wrong.

Growing even more nervous, the head of the Yun family glowered at his daughter and boomed, “You crazy girl, don’t speak such a tremendous lie. How could you even possibly think that you could lie to such intelligent men like them? Hurry up and come back home with me like a good child.” The man was very worried that Jian Chen and the others would seriously believe that she had a battle skill and would interfere. Therefore, he decided to go for broke and charged into the room to grab her. This was his final

attempt at trying to take her away to suppress her secret.

Dugu Feng did not stop the man from entering this time, allowing him to charge into the room without a problem. He tried to grab at the woman. However, Jian Chen's eyes flashed dangerously as he growled, "Who let you enter this room, scram!" With a wave of his right hand, a wave of energy from the world burst forth and slammed squarely into the man's body.

The head of the Yun family was only a primary Great Saint Master, and thus possessed no defenses against Jian Chen's strike. Without even being able to react, his body was thrown back from the tremendous strike and into the wall behind him. He had slammed so hard into the wall that there was a crater from where he smashed through it. A splurt of blood could be seen flying out from his mouth.

Jian Chen's control over the energy was exceptionally refined. He had only struck the head of the Yun family himself without any energy splashing over into the inn itself. The tremendous might from the blow had caused the soldiers of the Yun family and even the daughter to be terrified. Everyone could only whip their heads back to Jian Chen with paling faces of terror.

As a primary Great Saint Master, someone like the head of the Yun family could only be considered as a mediocre person within Fengyang City. However, even he would be considered as one of the stronger mediocre people. Therefore, when a person like him was sent flying without resistance by a youth no older than twenty-something, everyone could only look on in shock.

With pointed eyes, Jian Chen stared down the young woman and urged her on, “Do you really have the Miracle Water of Bi?”

She didn’t know why Jian Chen was so concerned about the Miracle Water of Bi, but his strength had frightened her so much that she could only nod in silence.

“Ming Dong, hand me a piece of parchment and a brush.” He asked Ming Dong.

“Right!” Without delay, Ming Dong turned around to walk out and retrieve both items Jian Chen had asked for from the innkeeper.

Putting both parchment and brush onto a table, Jian Chen told the woman, “Write down all that you know about the Miracle Water of Bi here.”

Hearing the non-negotiable order of Jian Chen, the woman hesitated for only a moment before finally responding, “If I write this down, then will you agree to my request? Will you destroy the Yun family and kill the murderer of my mother?”

“I promise.” This time, Jian Chen hadn’t hesitated to answer.

Having received Jian Chen’s promise, the young woman couldn’t help but let out a sigh of relief. She knew that this would go against her mother’s wishes when she was told to never give it to any outsider, but with the situation as it was, there had been no other

choice.

Quickly putting the brush to the parchment, the young woman had soon written down a complete battle skill for Jian Chen.

Taking the word-filled parchment into his hands, Jian Chen began to look at the inner contents. The longer he read, the more thunderstruck he felt.

The Miracle Water of Bi was not unknown to Jian Chen since it was the battle skill that was handed down from generation to generation in the Bi family. Once, his uncle Bi Dao and mother Bi Yuntian had wanted to gift him the battle skill as well, but he was no longer capable of using Saint Force as a whole since he had lost his Saint Weapon. Furthermore, he knew that this Miracle Water of Bi was separated into three stages, the first was a Human Tier, the second was an Earth Tier, and the third was a Heaven Tier.

From what the woman had written down, it fully depicted the first and second stage of the Miracle Water of Bi. Word for word, it was a perfect match to what Bi Dao and his mother had once told him; this was far too much for Jian Chen to believe.

Slowly putting down the piece of paper, Jian Chen looked at the young woman seriously, “Tell me, where did you learn of this Miracle Water of Bi?”

“This was what my mother told me, is there a problem with it?” She answered with a puzzled expression.

“What was the name of your mother?”

When Jian Chen asked her, the young woman began to think hard, searching the deepest parts of her mind where memories of her kind and caring mother were kept. She couldn't help but begin to tear up from these nostalgic but painful memories as she sobbed out, “My mother was called Bi Yunhai!”

As if struck by lightning, Jian Chen's entire body began to shake as the parchment with the battle skill fell from his hands. In disbelief, Jian Chen looked at the young woman in despondence, “Bi Yunhai. Bi Yunhai. Your mother had the surname of Bi...”

Ming Dong and the others stared in confusion at Jian Chen; they didn't know what had happened to the Bi family, and didn't understand the relationship Jian Chen had with them. Naturally, they wouldn't know why Jian Chen would be so taken aback when he heard that the young woman's mother had the last name of Bi.

“Brother, are you okay?” Ming Dong couldn't help but ask in concern. As Jian Chen was his brother, the mood of Jian Chen would influence him as well.

Quashing down the surge of emotions that was assaulting his mind, Jian Chen slowly shook his head. “I'm fine.” with that, his eyes turned back to fixedly stare at the young woman. In this single moment, the expression in his eyes drastically changed.

“What is your name?” Jian Chen asked with a surprisingly warm and kind voice.

“My name is Yun Lian!” She replied. Her bright eyes stared curiously at Jian Chen as if confused about the look Jian Chen was giving her. She was a clever person and could sense the change in Jian Chen’s voice, but it confounded her on why it had happened in the first place.

“Your mother has already died, correct?” Jian Chen asked.

Upon mention of her mother, Yun Lian’s eyes began to well up with tears once more before giving a grieved nod of her head.

Sighing, Jian Chen replied, “So your mother never told you about the Bi family.”

Yun Lian looked blankly at Jian Chen before shaking her head. She had not a single iota of knowledge relating to the Bi family.

“How did your mother die?” Jian Chen asked one word at a time with each pause growing even more cold than before.

A furious glare emerged from Yun Lian’s eyes as she tightly clenched her teeth. “My mother was beaten to death by the head of the Yun family. He is a beast in the shape of a man. For the sake of learning the Miracle Water of Bi from my mother, he tried to beat it out of her. But my mother was unwilling. Her body had already been weak, and after such an inhuman beating, she was unable to endure it any more. She left the world...”



Yun Lian burst into tears at this point, “My mother’s death was far too cruel. I must take revenge for the sake of my mother. Her murderer is no man, but a beast in disguise!” Although the head of the Yun family was her father, Yun Lian felt no emotions for him besides hatred.

Jian Chen’s fist had tightened so much that the knuckles in his hand released a series of crackling sounds in symbolization of his anger.

“Dugu Feng, bring the head of the Yun family here right now.” Jian Chen growled.

Dugu Feng gave a deep stare at Jian Chen before turning around to leave. Quickly bringing back the injured man, he tossed the man unceremoniously onto the ground.

The head of the Yun family had been grievously injured after receiving a single strike from Jian Chen. Even now, he found himself without the energy to stand back up. An Earth Saint Master wouldn’t be able to take the strike of a Heaven Saint Master let alone a Great Saint Master.

“You beast! I’ll definitely make sure you’ll be buried with my mother!” Yun Lian immediately kicked her father’s head with hatred. After carefully hiding her emotions for so long, she had finally found an opportunity to take revenge. The violent hate she felt was now spilling out all at once.

No one in the room stopped her. They decided to watch from the

sidelines. The treatment that her mother had suffered by the hands of this man for a battle skill was more than enough for them all to be filled with anger as well.

After a moment, Yun Lian finally grew tired. Falling to the ground, she began to cry, tears streaming down. No one could understand her mind, and no one could understand the torment and pain she felt. On one hand, the head of the Yun family was her father, and on the other hand, it was he that had killed her mother. Confronted with such a cruel choice, it couldn't possibly be a light situation for anyone else to take.

## Chapter 573: The Identity Of Bi Lian (Two)

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Yun Lian remained sprawled on the ground for some time before she finally cried herself to exhaustion. Her tears ceased, and the only thing left was pain.

A sigh escaped from Jian Chen's mouth as he stared at Yun Lian. Turning to Dugu Feng, he said, "Escort the man down, but make sure he doesn't run away."

Dugu Feng sensed that there had to be some sort of special connection between Yun Lian and Jian Chen. With the hatred between Yun Lian and the head of the Yun family, he decided not to ask about it for now. He nodded his head in a serious manner. "Very well. I'll look over him carefully." The man was picked up by Dugu Feng like a clump of mud, and carried out of the room.

Jian Chen hesitated for a moment as he watched Yun Lian. Finally, he said, "Come with me to the Gesun Kingdom."

She had not expected to hear the words that had come out of Jian Chen's mouth. The one's about going to the Gesun Kingdom, and thus, she was shocked as a result. Looking suspiciously at Jian Chen, she asked, "Why should I go with you to the Gesun Kingdom?"

"To confirm something. Perhaps you'll find family there." Jian Chen replied. All sorts of emotions were running through his mind at that moment. Who would have thought that a person he met just a few days ago would be a member of the Bi family?

“My family?” Yun Lian whispered for a moment before shaking her head in sorrow. “No, I have no family left. The only one I had was my mother, but even she is gone now. My father is no man, but a beast. He isn’t my rightful father. I’ll make sure to kill him by my own hand to satisfy my mother’s revenge.” Yun Lian bitterly cried out.

Slowly walking to Yun Lian, Jian Chen said once more, “Come with me to the Gesun Kingdom. There is one thing I must confirm. It relates to your mother.”

“To my mother? What could that be?” Yun Lian’s eyes lit up as if her interest had been piqued.

“I don’t have the words to say it right now. Wait until you come to the Gesun Kingdom, you will understand then.” Jian Chen explained in a serious tone.

She hesitated. This matter was surprisingly related to her mother, so she couldn’t be indifferent to it. After a moment’s hesitation, she finally nodded her head in agreement. “Fine, I will go with you to the Gesun Kingdom.”

“Then, let us go right now.” Jian Chen impatiently responded. Turning to Ming Dong and the others, he said, “I will return to the Gesun Kingdom first. Wait for me here until I get back. If anything happens, break this jade stone.” With that, Jian Chen handed a piece of jade to Ming Dong. This was an especially precious jade stone on the Tian Yuan Continent that would cause its sister stone

to break apart at the same time when crushed, no matter how far the distance was in between the two. As such, it was considered a surefire method of signaling.

The group knew that this situation held more to it than they had thought. It wasn't something they could even imagine, so they decided not to ask for now.

Taking the jade stone from Jian Chen, Ming Dong replied to him in serious manner, "Brother, come back quickly."

Nodding his head, Jian Chen gave his farewells to everyone before walking back to Yun Lian. "Is there anything else you have left to do here? If not, then we'll be on our way."

"There's nothing. But we're a long way from the Gesun Kingdom, shouldn't we prepare for our travel?" Yun Lian asked.

"No need, we'll be there very quickly." Jian Chen answered. Holding onto Yun Lian's arm, Jian Chen waved his hand. With a single thought, he enveloped them both with a bubble of wind. Before she could even react, Yun Lian and Jian Chen immediately shot from the room into the sky. Like a bright burst of azure light, they ascended into the sky at a lightning-quick speed. So fast that the bystanders in the streets had been unable to make out what it was.

The sudden sensation of being shot into the sky had frightened Yun Lian so much that she had cried out and turned pale in terror. When she recovered, she could only hear the wind streaming

through her ears and blowing her hair everywhere. Under her feet, Fengyang City had been reduced to a very small area. The previously giant city was now completely viewable in its entirety. Even the throngs of people on the streets had been reduced to the size of ants with no distinguishing characteristics between each one.

Stunned at the sight of the still rapidly diminishing city, Yun Lian was silent for a long while. At that current moment, she was terribly frightened and could not keep her heart in check.

It did not take long for Fengyang City to disappear into the horizon underneath the two. The scenery of the rest of the world gradually grew fainter before a plume of clouds started to obscure the ground from sight. Jian Chen had brought Yun Lian over a sea of clouds. Nothing else could be seen but the whiteness from the tops of the clouds.

After what seemed like a long while, Yun Lian finally regained her ability to think coherently. With eyes wide open, she stared in disbelief at the young but handsome face of Jian Chen with one hand over her mouth in shock. “Yo-you-you’re a... a Heaven Saint Master!”

A tidal wave of emotions overcame Yun Lian’s mind at that point. A Heaven Saint Master was among the strongest on the continent. On the power structure, they were nearly at the top, and would be heads above anyone else if put in any random kingdom. Even a king would have to treat them as majestic and illustrious entities with most haste. Their very existences were the same as being compared to an entire kingdom. The rise or fall of a

kingdom was completely dependent on where the Heaven Saint Master was in the equation.

Yun Lian hadn't thought it was possible that the youth right next to her would actually be a Heaven Saint Master. In the eyes of a commoner, men like these were god-like.

The Yun family was a small household, but as their treasured daughter, Yun Lian was gifted in her intelligence. She herself knew clearly what a Heaven Saint Master meant. As long as there was a Heaven Saint Master in place, then even a nobody clan would leap several rungs on that ladder to become one of the strongest powers in any kingdom.

With a hand covering her wide open mouth, she continued to stare at Jian Chen in mute silence. A Heaven Saint Master was indeed too much for her to take in at once.

Seeing shocked expression on Yun Lian's face, Jian Chen couldn't help but reveal a small smile. He didn't bother to explain anything. He just continued to hurry on his way as if impatient to quickly arrive back at the Changyang clan to prove Yun Lian's identity.

It took six hours before Jian Chen finally arrived at the Gesun Kingdom. Without even stopping, he rushed on toward Lore City.

After a single hour, the two of them finally arrived outside of Lore City. From far away, plenty of tents could be seen set up away from the city walls. Above each tent was a banner with the "Qin" symbol emblazoned on it.

After such a long travel time, Yun Lian had already regained some semblance of tranquility. Seeing the barracks over there, she asked out of curiosity, “Is that the army from the Qinhuang Kingdom?”

“Correct. There is about half a million soldiers from the Qinhuang Kingdom. With the name of the Eastern Deity Swords, they are one of the strongest armies of the Qinhuang Kingdom.” Jian Chen explained.

“Then this city must be Lore City. The rumors are true then. The Qinhuang Kingdom and the Changyang clan have a connection between the two if the army is stationed here.” Yun Lian muttered with admiration. The Qinhuang Kingdom was one of the Eight Great Powers on the continent, and with their support, the name of the Gesun Kingdom had been established as the dominant power over this area with no other equal.

Continuing to fly into the city like a bright bullet made of azure light, the two of them entered Lore City before Yun Lian could even properly study it. In seconds, they finally touched down in front of a giant compound, the Changyang Manor.

“Follow me in!” Jian Chen released Yun Lian’s shoulder, and called out for her to follow him into the grounds.

Surveying the compound, Yun Lian’s eyes subconsciously hovered over the giant signboard on top of the gates where the three words, “Changyang Manor” had been carved out in fancy



calligraphy. At this sight, Yun Lian immediately turned pale.

Although she had lived her entire life in Fengyang City, she was aware of the events that had occurred in the Gesun Kingdom. The matters relating to the Changyang clan were especially clear to her.

The Changyang clan was once a rather low-profile clan within the Gesun Kingdom. After the war between the four kingdoms and the Gesun Kingdom, the might of the Changyang clan was brought forth for the whole world to see. Hence, they became well known as a result. Even after that, when the ten Heaven Saint Masters from the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom attacked, they were forced back by the clan and had lost several of their members as a result. Such a battle had further increased the Changyang clan's name. They deserved to be recognized as the strongest in the Gesun Kingdom. Completely replacing the Huayun Sect as the strongest power, not even the royal family could stop them.

The extremely high status that the Changyang clan had obtained couldn't even be compared to the Yun family who was insignificant in Fengyang City. They were ants in comparison to the three major clans in that city, but similarly, those three clans would be insects in comparison to the Changyang clan who was already heads above the royal family in might.

Yun Lian had never expected to see herself stand outside the gates to the Changyang clan; this was a clan that she regarded favorably.

Hurriedly pulling at Jian Chen's robes, she said with worry,

“This is the Changyang clan. Why did you bring me here? Are you sure we didn’t fly to the wrong place?”

Smiling, Jian Chen replied, “Don’t worry, there’s no problems here. Follow me.” With that, Jian Chen pulled Yun Lian through the doors.

Upon Jian Chen’s entrance, the two soldiers guarding the entryway had snapped to salute with the utmost amount of respect they could muster. As Jian Chen grew closer, the two of them bowed down at the same time, “We pay our respects to the fourth master!”

The loud shouts of the two frightened the timid Yun Lian who was right beside Jian Chen. Suddenly, her mind registered what had been said which caused her to snap her head back to Jian Chen. “Fourth master? Are you the famous fourth master of the Changyang clan, Changyang Xiangtian?”

## Chapter 574: The Identity Of Bi Lian (Three)

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Yun Lian stared at Jian Chen with wide open eyes of shock. Changyang Xiangtian, the fourth master of the Changyang clan was a name that practically everybody in this region had heard about. He was an idol that practically every youth worshipped and strived to be.

Not only was he a Heaven Saint Master, he was also the Imperial Protector of the Gesun Kingdom. Each title he owned was more than enough for everyone to see him as an entity worthy of respect. These two titles were as good as halos that enveloped his entire person. Therefore, every youth recognized him as a god that overlooked the country from his domain, and nobody could encroach upon that domain.

Jian Chen smiled when he saw the astonished look on Yun Lian's face. "Come inside then." He spoke as he led the still surprised Yun Lian inside the manor.

"So you were the fourth master of the Changyang clan, Changyang Xiangtian. I should have realized that. Aside from the fourth master of the clan, who else could possibly be a Heaven Saint Master at such an age?" Yun Lian muttered as she looked at Jian Chen with eyes of adoration.

The newly established Changyang Manor's architecture was beautiful. If the old building was night, then the new building was day. Even the interior had become far more imposing. No matter where one looked, a squadron of guards could be seen walking about as they patrolled the grounds with diligence. The pride of

even the soldiers could not be contained on their faces. To them, being the guards of the Changyang clan was an unbelievable honor that even their ancestors would be proud of.

It also went without saying that the fourth master of the Changyang clan would be the person they respected the most. All Jian Chen had to do was walk on over and every guard would immediately bow their backs with the utmost respect.

Walking through the compound, Yun Lian continued to turn her head at every corner to inspect the scenery with great curiosity. All sorts of emotions ran through her mind in violent waves; the Changyang clan was a clan that was too high for her to reach even if it was just her eyes that touched it. She never expected to be able to personally visit their compound.

There were no further obstructions for either of the two as they walked to the room of Jian Chen's mother, Bi Yuntian. Quickly, Jian Chen walked to her door. The guards and maids stationed there bowed down in a hurry, "We pay our respects to the fourth master!"

"Is my mother inside?" Jian Chen asked the two maids.

"My lady is currently inside resting, fourth master." One of the maids respectfully answered.

After the maid had spoken, the doors suddenly opened to reveal the white-robed Bi Yuntian. When she saw Jian Chen, her eyes lit up with excitement, "Xiang'er, when did you come back? Why did

you not send a message to your mother earlier?” There was a kind and loving tone to her voice. She truly loved this child of hers, and she was so proud of him, especially with his many accomplishments.

Curiously, Bi Yuntian looked at the graceful Bi Yuntian, “Is this Changyang Xiangtian’s mother? Strange, why does she look similar to my mother?”

Jian Chen felt warm from the loving eyes his mother used on him. He smiled in return. “Mother, I actually came back for a rather important matter. Let us go inside your room first.”

Leading Yun Lian into the room, Jian Chen and Bi Yuntian walked over to the table meant for receiving guests, and sat down there.

As soon as the three sat down, Bi Yuntian couldn’t help but ask, “Xiang’er, who might this young lady be?” Even as she was speaking, Bi Yuntian was already pouring a cup of tea for the two to drink with a benevolent and motherly hand.

There was a rather uncomfortable look in Jian Chen’s eyes as he looked at Yun Lian. “Mother, she is called Yun Lian, a citizen from the Blue Wind Kingdom, but her mother is someone I believe you might recognize.”

“Oh? Whom might that be? I have always lived within the Changyang Manor since my marriage. There aren’t many that I know.” Bi Yuntian gently laughed.

Jian Chen hesitated for a brief moment before attentively looking back to his mother, “Mother, do you happen to know a person named Bi Yunhai?”

“Clatter!”

As soon as that name was mentioned, the tea pot in Bi Yuntian’s hand fell to the table. It spilled the tea water inside all over the table.

Not even taking notice of the fact that her clothes were slowly getting wet from the tea water, Bi Yuntian stared at Jian Chen with piercing eyes. She questioned with a quavering voice, “What did you say? Xiang’er, have you seen my younger sister Yunhai? Is she still alive? Where is she?” BI Yuntian’s voice grew more and more frantic.

Seeing such a large reaction from her, Jian Chen was able to confirm the guess in his mind. Yun Lian’s mother was indeed a member of the Bi family. It would also appear that the relationship between her and his mother was extremely close.

Yun Lian clearly heard each and every word from Bi Yuntian, but the meaning behind her words knocked her for a loop. From the very start, she couldn’t possibly guess just what sort of relationship there was between her mother and the Changyang clan.

A mental sigh escaped from Jian Chen. He knew that Bi Yuntian

would feel anguished when she learned that Bi Yunhai had already passed on.

“Mother, Yun Lian is Bi Yunhai’s daughter. She is also in possession of our Bi family’s Miracle Water of Bi.” Jian Chen explained in serious tone.

Bi Yuntian’s eyes honed in on Yun Lian as if to study the details of her face. Slowly walking up to her, Bi Yuntian tenderly took hold of Yun Lian’s hands. She softly said, “So you were the daughter of my younger sister. Yes. Yes, you look quite similar to her when she was young. Lian’er, tell your aunt quickly. Where is your mother? Has she been well?”

The words “aunt” felt very foreign to Yun Lian, and her mind went blank as a result. The fourth lady of the Changyang clan and the mother of Changyan Xiangtian was her aunt? This sudden development had caused her to stiffen up into silence, unable to speak.

Bi Yuntian looked at Yun Lian with a gentle and warm light as if she was regaling her like she was her own daughter.

“Lian’er, tell your aunty. Where is your mother? Is she doing well?” She asked once more, tears springing forth from her eyes.

As soon as she heard mention of her mother, Yun Lian couldn’t stop the stinging tears of pain from welling up in her eyes. As they streamed down her cheeks, she let out a whimper, “My mother has already passed on.”

The expression on Bi Yuntian's face immediately froze in disbelief. Momentarily losing her voice, she stuttered, "What? Yunhai has... she's... she..." Bi Yuntian's feet gave way to her body, causing her to stagger and fall.

"Mother, careful!" Jian Chen cried out in alarm before quickly moving to his mother's side. Gingerly supporting Bi Yuntian back to her stool, he looked on in concern at his mother's pained face. He tried to console her, "Mother, please don't feel too hurt, this matter happened a long time ago."

Tears of grief sprang from her eyes like a fountain. Bi Yuntian's previous elation had instantaneously turned into anguish as she sobbed. "Lian'er, tell your aunty. How did your mother die?"

Yun Lian recalled the whole story for Bi Yuntian to hear. When she heard how Bi Yunhai had been beaten to death by the head of the Yun family for the battle skill, Bi Yuntian became even more grieved. She couldn't help but bitterly cry.

"Yunhai, my sister! Your death was a wretched one! Blame your useless older sister. If I had known earlier, then you wouldn't have had to suffer such misery." Bi Yuntian wailed in anguish.

"Aunty, did you know my mother?" Yun Lian managed to ask a question through her tears.

"Lian'er, your mother was my favorite sister. We were from the same Bi family, and that means your grandfather and my father



were one in the same. But ever since the calamity that befell our Bi family, many of our relatives have been killed off. Even your grandfather was killed. All that was left was my elder brother and I. The two of us had thought that we were the only ones left. Never did I imagine that Yunhai managed to escape as well. It is to my regret that I learned about this too late; otherwise I would never have let Yunhai suffer so much.”

Bi Yuntian could only feel regret when she thought about how Yun Lian’s mother had been beaten to death. She couldn’t possibly imagine just how much her younger sister had suffered under the hands of someone so inhumane.

“Sister Yunhai has suffered for far too long. I will make sure that her vengeance will be served by killing that beast of a man.” Bi Yuntian’s eyes radiated a furious light as she angrily spoke

“Then does that mean you’re... really my aunt?” Yun Lian’s teary eyes looked to Bi Yuntian.

Bi Yuntian nodded her head. “Lian’er, I am your aunt, and Changyang Xiangtian is your older cousin!”

Yun Lian’s entire person froze up at that declaration as she registered Bi Yuntian’s words. For a small moment, she couldn’t believe her ears. The fourth lady of the Changyang clan was her aunt, and the Imperial Protector of the Gesun Kingdom and the fourth master of the Changyang clan, Changyang Xiangtian, was her older cousin.

This situation was totally unbelievable in the mind of Yun Lian. She had completely worshipped geniuses like Changyang Xiangtian, and now that figure was her cousin?

Even Jian Chen felt rather stunned from where he was. Looking blankly at Yun Lian, he found it hard to remain calm. Not once did he ever imagine that the young miss of the Yun family back in Fengyang City would be his younger cousin.

## Chapter 575: A New Family Member

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The sudden introduction of a younger cousin made Jian Chen feel quite complex. He wasn't sure if he was happy or worried.

Yet, Jian Chen felt like rejoicing over his decision to not drive out Yun Lian from his room in the inn. If he had, then Yun Lian would have definitely suffered at the hands of her father, who would have done all that he could to extract the battle skill from her. If he was willing to treat his wife that way, he would treat his daughter in a similar fashion. The Yun family was a small one after all, and an Earth Tier Battle Skill was far too important.

Yun Lian's mother had most likely wanted no pressure to befall her daughter, so she had never told her a single thing about the Bi family. Until Yun Lian had met Jian Chen, she had never known the true identity of her mother.

The demise of Bi Yunhai had given Bi Yuntian a tremendous amount of grief, but the fact that her daughter was still alive gave her some solace. Her treatment of Yun Lian would be the same as if she was taking care of her own son. Although Yun Lian was not her own flesh and blood, Bi Yuntian would treat her as if she was with all the love and care she possessed.

Afterward, Bi Yuntian slowly started to explain the history of the Bi family to Yun Lian so that she could understand why her mother had never told her anything about her past. What Yun Lian couldn't believe was that her deceased mother was once the direct descendant of a powerful family.

The three of them remained within the room for more than two hours, giving them all plenty of time to recover from any residual grief.

“Xiang’er, treat her as you would your sister. With your power, you must ensure that you protect her. Don’t let your cousin suffer any more. She has already suffered enough.” Bi Yuntian made a request to Jian Chen.

Jian Chen nodded with a serious but honest expression as he pledged, “Mother, don’t you worry. I will definitely protect Yun Lian. I won’t let her feel anymore grievances.”

Yun Lian’s mind was sent into a flux once more when she heard Jian Chen’s words. She felt as if she was in a dream that was far too mystical to even be a dream. In the span of four hours, her identity had experienced a tremendous transformation. This to her was something that she had a hard time stomaching.

The Imperial Protector of the Gesun Kingdom, Changyang Xiangtian, was the person she had regarded the most. However, he was a figure she could only look at and not touch. Now, he was suddenly her older cousin, and he had even pledged to protect her from any harm or sorrow. Yun Lian really felt as if she had suddenly been transported into a dreamworld.

Softly pulling at Yun Lian’s hand, Bi Yuntian said, “Lian’er, your father treated your mother and you inhumanely. Forsake your last name of Yun and return to your roots as a member of Bi. Starting from today, you should take on the surname of Bi. Call yourself Bi Lian. You will be a member of the Changyang clan, and will have

nothing more to do with the Yun family.”

Hesitating for the longest time, Yun Lian finally nodded her head before replying meekly, “Aunty, I understand. But wouldn’t the other members of the Changyang clan see me as an outsider?” There was concern on her face.

A faint smile appeared on Bi Yuntian’s face. “Good good, you will now go by the name Bi Lian. Lian’er, you needn’t worry about a thing. With your cousin, no one will dare bully you. You don’t even need to worry about the other members from the Changyang clan. From the outside, it would seem that the power of the clan resides within the master of the household or the abdicated elders. In reality, it is your cousin that holds all of the power. Not a single person would dare ignore his words. Even the king of the Gesun Kingdom is no exception.”

Once more, Bi Lian felt shocked at Bi Yuntian’s words before turning to Jian Chen. She knew that Jian Chen held supreme status within the Gesun Kingdom, but she didn’t think that his status would be the same within the clan itself, especially if he reigned over the family head and the elders.

Pulling Bi Lian up, Bi Yuntian said, “Lian’er, it’s getting late. Why don’t we go eat a meal. I can introduce you to my husband and Chang Bai. Given some time, your aunty will take you to the imperial palace to see your uncle. Your uncle works as the captain commander of the imperial palace, so unless there is something important, he won’t come to visit.”

Hearing that her uncle was the captain commander of the Gesun

Kingdom, Bi Lian could really cement the fact that in a short few hours, her status had made a world-turning change. Being the golden daughter to the Yun family couldn't even compare.

Yet, this change had been too sudden. She found it hard to react.

“If my mother had known that aunty was alive and well, then perhaps she wouldn't have died.” Bi Lian thought to herself.

Afterward, Jian Chen and his mother led Bi Lian to the dining halls for a meal. At the table, Bi Lian came across the family head and his other wives. Bi Yuntian revealed Bi Lian's identity to them, but she had not go in depth with the matters relating to the Bi family. She only revealed that Bi Lian was the daughter of her long-lost sister.

Everyone was receptive to Bi Lian without a single objection. Everything was all due to the outstanding son of Bi Yuntian after all.

The meal was exuberantly cheerful, and Changyang Ba, Ling Long, and Yu Fengyan treated Bi Lian very amiably. The only one that acted unnaturally was third aunt Bai Yushuang.

The third aunt was someone that Jian Chen didn't even feel like greeting nowadays. Since his childhood, she had always objected to him and fought him over everything. When he had just returned to the Changyang clan, the third aunt had exploded to the point of being unable to stand him. If not for the fact that she was his aunt, Jian Chen wouldn't have forgiven her.

After the meal, Bi Yuntian led Bi Lian to her very own room while Jian Chen walked by himself to his own building in the compound to rest.

Night quickly gave way to day. In the morning, Jian Chen said his farewells to Changyang Ba before taking Bi Yuntian and Bi Lian into the air. They headed away from the manor toward the Blue Wind Kingdom.

Bi Yuntian harbored a very deep hatred for the one that had killed her younger sister. Without listening to anyone, she wanted Jian Chen to bring her to the Blue Wind Kingdom, so she take revenge. Unable to compromise, Jian Chen could only look helplessly from the side before agreeing to take her to the Blue Wind Kingdom.

After several hours of flight, Jian Chen returned to the same inn in Fengyang City. At that moment, Ming Dong, You Yue, Tie Ta, and Dugu Feng were all stepping out from the inn.

When they saw that Jian Chen had quickly returned, they were excited to see him. When their eyes landed on Bi Yuntian beside him, they looked at her in bewilderment.

“Ah, mother-in-law, what brings you here?” You Yue asked the white-robed but graceful Bi Yuntian a question from her surprise.

Bi Yuntian smiled and exchanged several words of greeting to You Yue before turning back to Jian Chen. With impatience, she

said, “Xiang’er, where is the murderer of my younger sister?”

Turning to Dugu Feng, Jian Chen commanded, “Bring out the head of the Yun family.”

Soon enough, the thin and sallow figure of the head of the Yun family was brought out by Dugu Feng. When she saw the killer of her sister, Bi Yuntian was unable to maintain her composure. Thus, she immediately started to kick at the man with fury.

“You immoral beast! Sister Yunhai was undoubtedly a treasure to behold by you, yet you failed to cherish the treasure that was my sister! Even worse, you beat her to death? I will make you pay for that crime with your life!” Bi Yuntian wailed in anguish as she furiously beat the man. When she thought back to her closest younger sister she and how she had been killed by this man, she could only feel anguish.

Bi Yuntian’s actions caused Ming Dong, You Yue, Dugu Feng, and Tie Ta to look on with wide eyes and open mouths. Absolutely bewildered, they could only stare at her and then at each other, but not a single one of them knew what to do or say.

The still-mourning Yun Lian was unable to stop herself as well. With both feet, she continued to kick at the head of her father while crying incessantly.

“Stop! Lian’er, I am your father! I may have done wrong with your mother, but you cannot treat me this way! I am your father, your family! Your father has done wrong, your father wishes to



apologize! Please forgive your father; if you don't give your father the antidote, your father will die from this poison!" He cried out with his head on the ground. With his body extremely battered and the poison having already taken root, he had lost the most basic of motor functions in his body. The only way he would survive now would be if his daughter gave him the antidote.

"You aren't fit to be my father. I don't have a father that is as cruel as you! From here on out, I forsake the last name of Yun and will take on the surname Bi!" Bi Lian howled with tears.

After beating the man soundly for a moment, the two women finally stopped to catch their breaths.

"Lian'er, take your aunty to see your mother's grave." Bi Yuntian commanded.

Nodding, Bi Lian took the group away from the inn while Dugu Feng was once more put in charge of guarding the head of the Yun family.

Quickly, the group arrived within a small grotto outside Fengyang City. The tomb of Bi Yunhai was rather simple with a small mound and a tombstone that was about half the height of a person. The words on the tombstone had been inscribed with "The grave of Bi Yunhai."

Seeing the simple and crude tombstone of Bi Yunhai, Bi Yuntian's eyes couldn't help but begin to flow with tears once more. Slowly kneeling down by the grave, she gingerly touched the

dusty tombstone as if it was the face of her sister and not cold hard stone.

# Chapter 576: Carrying the Coffin Into the City

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Bi Yuntian knelt down by Bi Yunhai's grave and tenderly touched the ice-cold gravestone. Droplets of tears flowed from her eyes as she revealed a sorrowful expression. In her mind, she couldn't help but think back twenty years ago when she was with her younger sister Bi Yunhai. Everyday with her had been a day of joy and happiness. They were practically inseparable. They would play with one another, eat with one another, and never were they ever apart.

"Sister Yunhai, everything was your sister's fault. I was unable to do anything. If I had known that you had escaped as well, I would never have allowed you to fall to such a state. Sister Yunhai, you suffered plenty those years. Even in your death your grave is a simple one. Blame your older sister for being inconsiderable." Bi Yuntian wailed in grief.

"Mother, your daughter will soon take revenge for you. Your daughter will personally kill the beast that claimed your life. Please, mother, rest in peace." Bi Lian knelt beside the grave and wailed alongside Bi Yuntian.

Seeing the pained look on their faces, Jian Chen felt a wave of grief in him well up from where he stood to the side, but he did not speak. Right by his side, Ming Dong, You Yue, and Tie Ta were all flabbergasted by the strange sight in front of them. Not a single one of them knew what was happening, nor did they understand the sudden a relationship between Bi Lian's mother and Bi Yuntian.

Unable to hold her silence after a short while, You Yue finally whispered to Jian Chen, “Jian Chen, what is going on here? How did this situation happen?”

Sighing, Jian Chen explained, “Yun Lian’s mother and my mother were sisters. She no longer goes by the name Yun Lian. Now she goes by Bi Lian. By rights, she is my cousin.”

Ming Dong and You Yue’s mouth dropped wide open at this piece of information from the shock they received.

“What? The young daughter of the Yun family is your younger cousin!” You Yue exclaimed in shock.

“That’s utterly unbelievable!” Ming Dong cried out as well before looking back to Bi Lian who was crying by the grave. He never imagined that the golden daughter that had barged into their room two days ago would actually be Jian Chen’s cousin.

Jian Chen watched his mother cry in grief for a small moment longer before finally walking up to console her, “Mother, please don’t feel sad. The dead cannot come back to life, and aunty Yunhai passed away years ago.”

Wiping her tears away, Bi Yuntian gave a small sob, “Sister Yunhai, you must have felt alone resting in this place by yourself for so many years. Worry not my sister. Now that I have finally found you, there is no way I won’t bring you back to Changyang Manor. I will be with you daily. You won’t be lonely anymore.”

Moving to the back of the gravestone, Bi Yuntian gently hugged the stone, and let her tears drop onto the tough earth below.

After years and years of weathering the wind, rain, and harsh sunlight, the soil had grown dry and rigid. After several attempts to dig out the soil with her tender fingers, Bi Yuntian's fingers had chafed up and started to bleed.

However, she did not seem to notice nor care. The pain that she felt in her fingers was incomparable to the pain she felt in her heart, so with all of her energy, she dug at the gravestone. With thoughts of bringing the grave of her sister away from here.

Such a sight hurt Jian Chen tremendously. Hurriedly grabbing hold of his mother's arm, he pleaded with her, "Mother, don't be like this, stop. Let your son do this, please rest for now."

Bi Yuntian shook her head, "No. I must save my sister myself. I will take my sister Yunhai back to Changyang Manor with my own two hands." Digging with all her might, her previously jade-like fingers were covered with both dirt and blood. The ground had become stained with her blood.

"Mother, please let your son help you." If he could not stop her, then Jian Chen would have to follow his mother's plan and take part himself. Moving to dig out the grave half as tall as he was, Jian Chen tried his best to alleviate his mother's pains as much as possible.

Bi Lian quickly joined the two of them next to the grave.

Together, the three dug at the grave with only their hands. “Mother, your daughter has done you wrong by letting you rest alone in this desolate wasteland for so many years. Mom, you’ll have a new home and family soon. Your daughter will follow you there. You won’t be alone anymore.”

“Allow me to help you aunty.” You Yue was moved by such a display. Holding back her tears, she knelt in front of the grave and began to use her tender, white hands to dig at the dirt.

Ming Dong displayed a complicated look on his face as he watched. Without a word, he followed You Yue’s example to kneel by the grave, and used his own fingers to dig into the dirt to excavate the tomb underneath. In the end, even Tie Ta joined their attempt.

Under the orderly movements of everyone, the grave was quickly excavated. Just two meters beneath the earth was a single dark coffin.

“Mother!” Seeing this coffin, Bi Lian’s sorrows and pains exploded all at once in the form of a single pain-filled howl. If not for Jian Chen stopping her, she would have most likely jumped down to hold the coffin.

Jian Chen’s heart was full of sorrow at the sight of this muddy coffin. Letting out a mental sigh to himself, he slowly levitated the coffin out of the ground by using the energy of the world. He carefully set it down on the open ground.

Nearing the coffin, Bi Yuntian's bloody hands gently wiped off the dirt on the coffin as if she was carefully polishing a priceless jewel.

“Sister Yunhai, twenty years have past by so fast. Do you still recognize me? It's me, your older sister Yuntian.” Bi Yuntian muttered. “Yunhai, come home with your sister. I'll be by your side daily. You won't be lonely anymore, okay?”

Bi Lian half collapsed onto the coffin with tears flowing from her eyes in an endless stream. So heavy were her tears that her eyes had already grown red from crying too much.

“Mother, Bi Lian, we should hurry the coffin back to the city. After spending so many years buried in this wasteland, I am sure aunty is fed up with this place.” Jian Chen consoled them.

This time, there was no opposition from Bi Yuntian and Bi Lian. They both agreed with Jian Chen's suggestion. Under Jian Chen's actions, he carried the coffin and left the area.

Holding the coffin, Jian Chen reentered Fengyang City under the eyes of countless of bystanders. They stared at him in complete flummox at this queer sight.

“Do you think that guy has an illness or something? Look at all that dirt, I bet he just dug it from the ground. Is he planning on entering the city with that? Doesn't he know that it's forbidden to do that?”

“He doesn’t know the rules at all I bet. Let’s watch and see if the guards stop him.”

Countless of soldiers and mercenaries pointed and jeered in Jian Chen’s direction as they ridiculed him.

With the coffin on his shoulder, Jian Chen quickly strode forward to enter the city.

One of the soldiers immediately came up to stop Jian Chen. Seeing that Jian Chen was carrying a coffin, the soldier took him to be a vagabond that couldn’t possibly have any money, and decided that there would be no need to be civil with him. With a high and mighty voice, he said, “Stop right there! Our Fengyang City has disallowed any coffin from entering the city. If you wish to enter the city...”

“Get lost!” Before he could even finish speaking, Jian Chen had already let out a loud command before kicking the soldier square in the chest to send the soldier flying.

“There’s a troublemaker! Arrest him!”

As if a nest of a hornet had been poked, a multitude of soldiers came flying out with their weapons raised. On top of the city walls, several soldiers had prepared their crossbows to fire at Jian Chen.

Jian Chen’s mood had been soured by today’s events, and with the annoying buzz of the soldiers, he felt his killing intent rise.



With so many soldiers charging at him, Jian Chen's eyes let out an icy glare before his killing intent billowed out from his body, dropping the surrounding temperature down several degrees. Anyone close to him immediately felt as if they had been plunged into icy-cold water, stopping them dead in their tracks.

On the city walls, the captain of the city guards muttered to himself, "Deary me. With the heads of the three major clans dead, our Fengyang City has lost a terrible amount of military might. Our city lord is the only Earth Saint Master left as a result from those obscenely strong youngsters back at the auction house. In age, they are younger than me, but in power, they are incomparably stronger than me. One of them is even a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master; they will become a Heaven Saint Master any day now. How inconceivable. How very inconceivable. I wonder which family they belong to." The commander's eyes reflected an envious look.

At the same time, the killing intent coming from Jian Chen had immediately shaken the commander from his thoughts.

Sensing the tremendous amount of killing intent, the commander turned pale with fright. Bolting up from his chair, he cried out, "What killing intent! Where is that coming from?" Before he had even finished his sentence, the commander was already running out from the building he was in.

When the commander saw the soldiers surrounding Jian Chen down below, his eyes immediately dilated and his face drained of any remaining color. In a frantic hurry, he cried out, "Stay your hand! Every soldier, stand down at once!" As he cried out, the

commander thought back to the sight he had witnessed back at the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House. It had been deeply ingrained in his mind that this new group of people were not people they could offend at any costs.

## Chapter 577: An Impressive Burial (One)

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There had been no need for the commander to command them to stop, for the soldiers around Jian Chen were already at a complete stop. With terrified eyes, they observed the murderous aura radiating from Jian Chen in fear. Thoroughly intimidated by Jian Chen, not a single soldier dared to act as aggressive as before.

The commander feared that the soldiers had angered Jian Chen and that he would slaughter them all in anger, so the commander didn't delay for even a moment. He leaped off the wall to run to Jian Chen. When he saw the dark and foreboding expression on Jian Chen's face, the commander's face grew nervous and his body started to shake.

This youngster in front of him was the very person that feared not even the Harido clan. A power like that was far beyond what Fengyang City could even think of annoying.

"My lord, please quell your anger. This was a mistake born from my careless discipline. Your humble servant will properly penalize these bastards who have done you wrong. This one hopes that you will turn the other cheek and forego what has happened just now and let bygones be bygones." The commander hurriedly asked Jian Chen for forgiveness with an enchanting smile and a respectful salute. He was afraid that this small offense would cause another calamity to befall Fengyang City.

The commander carefully observed Jian Chen's face before he hurriedly turned around to look at the soldiers around them. He would definitely not be as respectful to these soldiers as he was to

Jian Chen. His face darkened as he let a voice filled with a superior boom from his mouth, “You sightless bastards! How dare you act so rudely against the lord here? Are you tired of living? Who was the idiot to stand up against this lord here? Stand front and center to beg for forgiveness at once!”

There was a slight shuffle of hesitation within the soldiers before finally a pale-faced soldier came stumbling out from behind the group. There was a clear footprint on his chest, marking him as the soldier Jian Chen had first kicked.

Striding over to the soldier, he slammed his foot into the butt of the soldier and began to scold him, “Hurry up and beg forgiveness from the lord!”

The commander had kicked him so hard that the soldier fell flat onto the ground next to Jian Chen’s feet. There was no anger in the soldier’s face at all, only complete and utter fear. He was fully aware of the fact that he had angered the worst person possible.

“My lord, this lowly soldier has done wrong. This lowly soldier with no eyes has erred and wasted the precious time of my lord. My lord, please be generous and spare the life of your subordinate.” The soldier lamented pitifully right in front of Jian Chen. Right now in the man’s mind, his regret had been so huge that his intestines had gone green.

With a heavy and dark expression, Jian Chen’s eyes frostily glared at the soldier in front of him. The series of events that had happened today had already caused his heart to feel down, causing his temperament to be crabbiest. When the soldier had stopped him

from carrying the coffin of his aunt Yunhai into the city, Jian Chen had truly been ready to kill. If not for the timely apology from the commander, there would have most likely been a bloodbath in front of the city gates.

By this time, You Yue had moved to Jian Chen's side and held his left arm. "Jian Chen, let it go. There's no need to waste time on such small matters."

As a result of You Yue's words, the murderous aura around Jian Chen's body slowly ebbed away. Still staring icily at the soldier kneeling in front of him, he yelled, "Scram!"

Seeing that the situation had stabilized, the commander was able to let out the long breath of air he was holding mentally. Grabbing the clothes of the soldier and tossing him to the side, he cried out in anger, "Hurry up and move out of the way! Don't block the lord's path." A smile then greeted his face as he spoke to Jian Chen with a cordial tone, "My lord, if you would, please enter the city. This one won't hold up any more of your precious time. Please, have a nice trip!"

Despite Fengyang City decreeing that carrying unlucky items such as coffins were forbidden, Jian Chen's entrance brokered no attempt from the commander to stop him. On the contrary, the commander had welcomed him in with the utmost respect as if he was afraid of offending him.

Without another word, Jian Chen heaved the coffin with Bi Yunhai into the city. With a heavy expression behind him, Bi Yuntian, You Yue, Ming Dong, Tie Ta, and Bi Lian followed.

After they entered the city, the area near the city gates finally resumed its normal schedule. There had been plenty of people who had stopped as a result of the exchange, but not a single one of them spoke after the series of events that had transpired. Everyone could only stare at the retreating figures of Jian Chen and his group in silent awe.

In the eyes of the merchants and mercenaries, the city guards were not to be trifled with. Although these soldiers weren't stronger than the mercenaries, they were still representing the Blue Wind Kingdom's government as a military. In the case that there was conflict, the entire Blue Wind Kingdom would post a warrant or bounty for the one responsible if one did not have the proper backing.

The people who first saw the youngster carry the coffin toward the gates witnessed the youth kicking and injuring one of the guards, and also watched the very same youth be bowed down to and waited on like a dog by the commander of the city guards for forgiveness. Everyone could only try to guess what powerful status the youth held for the commander to fear him so much.

With the still dirty coffin held high on his shoulders, Jian Chen strode down the streets of the city, causing everyone to glance over at him. Whomever Jian Chen had passed, they would stop and turn to look at him with a bizarre expression.

Entering the city with a coffin in hand was an extremely rare sight to be seen in Fengyang City. Unlucky items like coffins were forbidden within the city. They could only be left outside.

However, plenty of them recognized Jian Chen as the one responsible for killing five Earth Saint Masters at the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House several days ago. It was with great fright that the look in their eyes turned fearful.

Soon enough, Jian Chen had brought the coffin back to the inn. Upon entering the inn, he had frightened one of the waiters who wailed straight away, “Customer, how could you bring a coffin into this establishment? Our city has forbidden the possession of one, please put it away, or you’ll scare away the other customers.”

The innkeeper came rushing out when he heard the commotion. When he saw the coffin, he said with an embarrassed expression, “Dear customer, if you could please find somewhere else to put the coffin. We cannot have such an item in our inn, otherwise, how will our other customers dare rest here?”

Striding forward, Ming Dong placed several purple coins into the innkeeper’s palm, “Then we’ll rent out the entire inn. If they’re willing to stay here, then let them. If they don’t, then they can get lost. Spare the words and get out of our way.”

The stack of purple coins that Ming Dong gave the innkeeper was more than enough to pay for the expenses of the inn for several months. Seeing such a tremendous sum placed into his hand, the innkeeper’s previously anxious eyebrows loosened and rose up in delight. Hurriedly putting away the coins, he replied, “Yes — well spoken. A coffin is only but a small matter — nothing worth worrying about at all. Dear guests, if you would please, come in!”

When Jian Chen and the others disappeared up the stairwell, the innkeeper clasped the purple coins with both hands in utmost delight. “How generous those lords are. These purple coins are far more than enough for this inn to operate for months! A windfall this was, this was definitely a profit for us.”

Some of the mercenaries who had been eating off by the side chose that time to speak up, “Innkeeper, the word ‘fear’ doesn’t exist in your dictionary, does it? Do you even know who those people who gave you money are?”

“Of course I know! They have to be the young lords of some well-off family. Where else would they have so much money?” The innkeeper laughed in response.

“Here, let me tell you. Those youngsters were the ones that killed the Earth Saint Masters of the three clans to this city. Even the two Earth Saint Masters from the Harido clan were killed off by them...” The mercenary explained.

Straight away, the innkeeper’s face had drained of its color. “What? They’re the ones that killed the three heads?”

The same mercenary nodded in confirmation. “Correct. The youth that gave you that stack of coins was an Earth Saint Master who is only a step away from becoming a Heaven Saint Master.”

The shopkeeper’s knees buckled from the realization. Falling to the floor in apparent weakness, he muttered despondently, “Dear heavens, I took their money and even had the gall to tell them to



put their items elsewhere. I-I-I... I must be tired of living.”

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Jian Chen and the others only stayed in that inn for another day before a whole platoon of soldiers and their Class 4 Magical Beast mounts came riding into Fengyang City. There were a total of fifty of them, and they all wore black armor.

When the city soldiers saw the Class 4 Magical Beasts, they didn't dare stop them. Without even questioning them, the city soldiers opened up the gates to let them into the city.

The group of fifty stampeded through the streets of Fengyang City before finally coming to a stop right outside the inn. Dismounting, they all strode into the inn and headed straight to Jian Chen's room.

“We pay our respects to the Imperial Protector!” The soldiers bent down in salute as they greeted Jian Chen.

Jian Chen's eyes swept over the black-armored soldiers and then to the one leading the troop, “Qin Wujian, you arrived quickly I see.”

“If it is the command of the honored Imperial Protector, then your servant would not dare hesitate to command my soldiers here at once!” The armored man replied. He was one of the commanders from the Qinhuang Kingdom, Qin Wujian.

“Prepare a carriage and make the arrangements to transfer my aunty’s coffin back to the Gesun Kingdom.” Jian Chen instructed. In order to bring Bi Yunhai’s coffin back to the Gesun Kingdom, Jian Chen had decided to use a carriage to transport her back. It would serve as a way to honor Bi Yunhai and it would be the proper way to transport her back home. A matter like this shouldn’t be haphazardly arranged, so Jian Chen thought of the best way to resolve the matter.

## Chapter 578: An Impressive Burial (Two)

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It did not take too long for a grand carriage to come to a stop right in front of the inn. One could tell that this carriage was brand new just by looking at it. It was particularly pretty and had plenty of flowers on it, like it was a carriage decorated for a festival.

Jian Chen could be seen carrying the coffin of Bi Yunhai out of the inn before he carefully placed it into the carriage.

The carriage had previously been rented with a single Class 1 Magical Beast, but the beast had quickly been replaced with nine Class 4 Magical Beasts. That had been a major change for the inhabitants of Fengyang City at the very least. They had never heard of anyone using a Class 4 Magical Beast as a mount before.

After everything was finished, the group wasted no more time staying within the city. They slowly urged the carriage out from the city. Many of them chose to walk, but at least fifty of the Eastern Deity Sword soldiers remained seated on top of their Class 4 Magical Beast Mounts. Like loyal guards, they protected the carriage from both sides as it traveled down the roads, amid the people who talked about them.

Such a gathering was unprecedented within Fengyang City. Even the merchants and mercenaries that had been to plenty of cities felt stunned. Quickly moving out of the way when the carriage drew near, they all clearly saw the Class 4 Magical Beasts. The people that own them were definitely not people they could afford to mess with.

The carriage and the men guarding it left Fengyang City in a hurry, and now with a complete troop formation ready to pull the carriage, they traveled even faster. In a decent amount of time, the carriage arrived back within Gesun Kingdom.

Jian Chen had not forgotten about the head of the Yun family. He had a squadron of soldiers look after him from behind the carriage.

This short journey had taken roughly seven days before they arrived back at Lore City within the Gesun Kingdom. These seven days had not been much to Jian Chen, Ming Dong, or the other soldiers, but for Bi Lian and Bi Yuntian who were not used to traveling long distances, their faces had grown sagged and weary halfway through the journey.

Even after returning home, Bi Yuntian disregarded her weary body and sought out the assistant housekeeper of the Changyang clan to arrange Bi Yunhai's funeral.

When he had heard the news, the assistant housekeeper looked hesitant, "Fourth lady, having a funeral for an outsider shortly after our Changyang clan was refurbished would be a little inappropriate. The elders of the clan will most likely not agree to such a thing."

Bi Yuntian's face grew dark as she said, "What outsider? This is my sister. Assistant housekeeper Xu, you will make the arrangements at once."

"That..." The man found himself stuck between a rock and a hard

place. The Changyang clan was not some sort of two-bit clan. They were a clan of nobles within the Gesun Kingdom. Having a funeral for an outsider was something the assistant housekeeper found inappropriate.

“Did you hear what my mother said? What is so inappropriate about burying my aunty here? Hurry up and make the preparations.” Jian Chen suddenly came toward them, giving the man a sharp glare.

After being hit by the angry eyes of Jian Chen, the assistant housekeeper began to tremble, “Ye-yes! A thousand pardons, fourth master. This servant will make the preparations right away.” When Jian Chen had spoke up, the man didn’t dare to speak back to him. Jian Chen held the highest position within the Changyang Clan, and the man was more than aware of it. The honor and glory that the Changyang clan had obtained was solely due to Jian Chen’s contributions.

When Jian Chen spoke, not a single person, not even the elders of the clan, would dare speak a word that would conflict with his own.

Under the management of the assistant housekeeper, the imperial guards and servants of the clan immediately moved into action to prepare for a funeral and the necessary arrangements. In the end, it had been Chang Wuji himself that came forward to give advice to the others.

Under the combined efforts of hundreds, it had taken half a day before everything was complete. Bi Yunhai’s coffin had fresh

flowers arranged all around it. Bi Yuntian had hung a scroll with her sister's likeness on it from the memories of years ago. From the image, Bi Yunhai looked to be a very regal person, and one could see the very close similarities between she and Bi Yuntian because of the vividness of the image. The only defect in the image was on the face of Bi Yunhai. There was a rather malicious scar.

After everything was done, a ceremonious burial project began. The rest of Lore City found the burial ceremony rather strange and confusing since it was arranged during a prosperous time for the Changyang clan. At the same time, it caused a ripple of gossip to resonate across Lore City. In a flash, the head of the other three major clans of Lore City came to visit and inquire what in the world had happened. At the same time, several of the smaller factions came by as well to express their sympathies. They also hoped that they could join the funeral themselves and earn them some small favors from the clan.

After the second day of the funeral, the king of the Gesun Kingdom came to Lore City along with his commander, Bi Dao, and roughly five hundred soldiers. Even the headmaster of Kargath Academy, Khafir, had been informed and flew from his academy to visit.

With the peculiar status of the Changyang clan, the entire future of the Gesun Kingdom was now relying upon the clan. Now that a funeral had suddenly popped up in the clan, the entire city had been startled and wondered just which important person had left the world. For that reason, the major powers of the kingdom came rushing on over.

When they all realized that it was Bi Yuntian's long-separated sister, they all let out a secret sigh of relief. Bi Dao on the other hand still felt rather depressed.

News of the funeral quickly made its way around the area, and soon, the many factions of the Gesun Kingdom were made aware of the happenings within the Changyang clan. This had prompted plenty of important figures to come flying to Lore City to express their sympathies.

Even the two grand elders of the Hua Yun Sect came by in person. One reason they came was to express their condolences, the other reason was to give their apologies for what had transpired between them and Jian Chen all those years ago. They even brought along a hefty sum to help their apology.

In short, the funeral of Bi Yunhai was very important. Not only did the major factions of the Gesun Kingdom come to visit, the king himself came to pay his respects.

The funeral continued for seven whole days before wrapping up. This time, Bi Yunhai's grave was no longer in a desolate place like before. Instead it was in the courtyard where Bi Yuntian lived within the compound. A jewel made specifically for the purpose of fengshui had been affixed to Bai Yunhai's grave, and had made the grave into a very grandiose one.

With the funeral ending, every visiting party slowly went back home. Only Bi Dao was left remaining within the household. Like a statue, he remained upright in front of Bi Yunhai's grave for three days without moving, but his face revealed pain.

Bi Dao and Bi Yuntian were both siblings under the same parents, meaning that the parents of Bi Yunhai were also the very same parents of Bi Dao. Not only did they have the cleanest blood ties, he and Bi Yunhai had also been very close playmates since they were young.

“Sister Yunhai, I never thought that you survived that day as well, and in a neighboring city as well. Why did I not hear about you sooner? If I had known, I would have gathered the three of us together to live. But, now, now we are separated once more by the borders of yin and yang.” Bi Dao’s eyes stared sorrowfully at the grave as he whispered to it.

Bi Yuntian pulled Bi Lian’s arm to him, “Brother, this the daughter that sister Yunhai left behind. Her name is Bi Lian. Bi Lian, this is your uncle.”

Looking to the armor-wearing Bi Dao, Bi Lian let out a filial-sounding phrase, “Uncle.”

Bi Dao’s eyes finally tore themselves from the grave to look to the eighteen year old Bi Lian with complicated emotions. After a moment of silence, he finally said, “Although my younger sister Bi Yunhai has left us, she left behind a child for us.”

“Bi Lian. You needn’t worry. Your uncle will protect you from now on.”

For the first time in forever, Bi Lian felt that she finally had a



warm family that cared and loved her. A family that could protect her. A family that was completely different than the Yun family. Tears began to fall from her eyes because of her new family.

Bi Dao looked back to the grave of Yunhai once more, “Where is the murderer of Yunhai!?”

“He has been locked within the tinder house. We don’t wish for him to die so easily, so we left him there for the time being.” Jian Chen responded. Bi Lian had already given the captive the antidote to the poison he had been administered, so he was in no danger of dying from it just yet.

Jian Chen hesitated when he saw Bi Dao swiftly turn to walk to the tinder house. “Uncle, don’t let him die so easily!”

“I know!” Bi Dao didn’t even bother to turn around to respond. He quickly walked out of Jian Chen’s sight.

Not long after his disappearance, a miserable wail could be heard coming from within the Changyang clan. It was such a pain-filled wail that everyone that heard it could tell that that person was being tortured.

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In the blink of an eye, half a month passed, and the funeral that had been held within the Changyang clan finally died down and was soon forgotten by everyone. Even Bi Lian and Bi Yuntian

found the pain in their hearts slowly dull, but despite that, a smile could hardly be seen on their faces.

Bi Dao stayed within Changyang Manor for another half month during this time. The hatred he felt for the one that killed Bi Yunhai had been etched within his bones, and every day he would use the cruelest methods he knew in order to treat the head of the Yun family to a hell of pain. After exhausting all the methods he knew on the man's body, Bi Dao had then given the man an excruciatingly slow death. Once dead he threw out the man's body into the plains for the wild animals to eat. What the man had suffered while alive and dead could be described to be the worst experience to feel on the continent.

After the death of the head of the Yun family, the vendetta for Bi Yunhai had finally reached an end. Bi Dao didn't stay much longer after that and had left for the imperial palace the day after.

After Bi Dao left, Jian Chen and the others gathered together along with his parents and the others from the clan. They were preparing to leave the compound to continue to develop the Flame Mercenaries.

“Cousin, please let me go with you.” Suddenly, Bi Lian asked to join Jian Chen with an earnest look on her face.

# Chapter 579: Carnage Mercenaries

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Puzzled, Jian Chen looked to Bi Lian, “Bi Lian, the road I walk is very terrifying and fraught with dangerous and gruesome deaths. A young woman like you shouldn’t involve yourself with such a lifestyle.” After these few days, Jian Chen had slowly warmed up to her and had even started to consider her a sister.

“Lian’er, the continent is very dangerous with very few safe sanctuaries. You shouldn’t travel outside, stay here in Changyang Manor; no one will mistreat you here.” Bi Yuntian explained.

Bi Lian shook her head as she pleaded, “Aunty, I don’t wish to stay here forever. I was unable to venture out by myself in the past. I wish to experience what the continent is like for myself. Cousin, please take me along with you.”

Jian Chen hesitated for a moment before finally agreeing to her request, “Fine then. If you want to come with us, then you can. Seeing how dangerous the continent is would be a boon for you in any case. Since you haven’t materialized your Saint Weapon, I could also give you some cultivation advice to help accelerate your growth.”

Hearing Jian Chen speak, Bi Yuntian knew that she couldn’t hold back her niece anymore. With a warning to Jian Chen, she said, “Xiang’er, you must protect your cousin well. She is still weak. Do not let anything happen to her at all costs.”

“Mother, please rest assured. I will definitely protect Bi Lian.”

Jian Chen pledged. Now that he had gained a cousin, Jian Chen felt like he was finally an older brother. At the same time, he felt as if another weight had been placed onto his shoulders now that he had to protect his younger cousin as well.

Jian Chen and Bi Lian bid farewell to the entire clan before leaving together. They were headed back to the Blue Wind Kingdom.

Two days later, Jian Chen and the others entered the borders of the Blue Wind Kingdom. Then with another half day of travel, they entered the First Class City that was known as the “Cloud Capital.”

If Jian Chen and the others were to ride their Class 3 Magical Beasts into a city like Wake City, it would have caused quite a stir. However, the sight of such mounts were common within the Cloud Capital.

Compared to a Second Class City, a First Class City was far more prosperous. There were plenty of people riding on Class 3 Magical Beasts in the First Class City, Cloud Capital. There had even been a single Class 4 Magical Beast on the streets. Plenty of mercenaries crowded the streets, and the majority of them were Saint Masters or Great Saint Masters at the very least. Compared to Fengyang City, this city was completely different.

Jian Chen’s group found a nearby inn to rest for the night before Ming Dong and Dugu Feng scouted the city for information. Tie Ta went with the two to walk around the city in hopes that he could learn a few things about the rules of society and how to survive.

After the three of them left, only Jian Chen, You Yue, and Bi Lian were left within the inn. At this moment, the three of them were seated in the higher levels of the inn, and were slowly eating the local delicacies. While sampling the delicious food, they listened to the bored chatter of the other mercenaries in hopes that they could glean some information from their gossip.

Jian Chen heard nothing of interest even after listening to them for a long time. These mercenaries talked about nothing other than what happened during their daily lives and would sometimes talk about how many magical beasts and monster cores they had gained that day. One of the mercenaries had even begun to drone about some of the prostitutes on the level above them.

Ming Dong and the other two had made a quick retreat after learning all that they could. Taking a seat at the table, Ming Dong whispered to Jian Chen, “Brother, I’ve researched all that I could, but the power structure in this city is far more complicated than the clear one in Fengyang City.”

Ming Dong paused for a moment before taking a sip of wine from his cup. After finishing off the cup, he continued to say, “On the upside, there are six major powers to the Cloud Capital; four clans and two sects. These six powers appear to be the strongest that the Cloud Capital has to offer. Each one of these associations is very close and interconnected with the others. After several hundred years of development, I think that they’re on the verge of becoming a single huge family with blood lines connected to and from each power.

“Aside from those six powers, there’s a few other clans and mercenary groups that aren’t too low in power compared to them. Each one of has an Earth Saint Master as their leader, but their names aren’t as influential as the six leading powers. From what I can tell, there are several clans that have multiple Earth Saint Masters.”

“Aside from the clans, which mercenary groups are strong in this city?” Jian Chen asked.

“There’s a total of four that I found. There’s the Bloodthorn Mercenaries, the Bloodrose Mercenaries, the Feral Mercenaries, and the Carnage Mercenaries. Now, the relationship between the Bloodthorn Mercenaries and the Bloodrose Mercenaries is very interesting. I’ve heard that the captain of the Bloodrose Mercenaries is very beautiful but feisty. The captain of the Bloodthorn Mercenaries deeply loves her and has sought her attention for many years. They aren’t a couple yet, but it is rather complicated between them I heard. Whatever the details are, I don’t know, but I do know that the two of them could be considered a single faction.”

“The Feral Mercenaries shouldn’t be belittled either. They are the most well known mercenary group in the Cloud Capital, and their captain is the sworn brother of the ruler of the city. Every single faction within Cloud Capital has to give that group some face.”

“As for the Carnage Mercenaries, they aren’t a stable power within the city. Rather, they were once free-roamers that eventually settled in the Cloud Capital five years ago and never

left. Still, they are quite strong, but their numbers are lacking with roughly three hundred people. Each one of them are elite warriors, and I heard that their weakest member is a Saint Master in strength. Fifty of them are Great Saint Masters at the very least, and I heard that the captain and his two vice-captains are Earth Saint Masters, making them the sole power within the city to have three Earth Saint Masters. Combined with the Bloodrose and the Bloodthorn Mercenaries, the Carnage Mercenaries make even the lord of the city fearful.”

“But the Carnage Mercenaries are still relatively low-profile within the city. It took plenty of time and energy for the three of us to make the inquiries, but we managed to find out that there has been very little movement from them in their five years of residency here. Every single member seems to hide away in their compound without ever coming out. With no way of income and no other property, it is a very mysterious situation.”

“Carnage Mercenaries!” Jian Chen muttered with a pensive look on his face. When Ming Dong had mentioned their name, Jian Chen had found that mercenary group to be strange as well.

“Cousin, the Carnage Mercenaries have to be hiding something if they never come out from their spot. Could they all be cultivating? Or perhaps they have some sort of enemy and are afraid of being discovered?” Bi Lian guessed with glimmering eyes. She looked to the handsome face of Jian Chen with eyes of worship.

Thinking for a moment, Jian Chen replied, “It’s hard to say. Ming Dong, where are the Carnage Mercenaries?”

“They’re not too far away from here. Just head ten kilometers that way and you’ll arrive at a large courtyard. All three hundred of the mercenaries live there.” Ming Dong replied.

Jian Chen closed his eyes and began to spread his presence in the direction Ming Dong had said. In a flash, he located the courtyard where the Carnage Mercenaries were located with absolute clarity.

Bi Lian had guessed correctly. All three hundred of the mercenaries were hidden away within the building cultivating. Each one of them held a Class 3 or Class 4 Monster Core, meaning that they were all exceptionally wealthy while several others were stationed around the courtyard as sentries. In the middle of the courtyard, three Earth Saint Masters were trying their best to cultivate as well.

Reopening his eyes, Jian Chen muttered, “The Carnage Mercenaries have much more to them as we inferred.”

“If they were just a simple power, then the Carnage Mercenaries wouldn’t have been known as the strongest group in the city. Jian Chen, do you think we should subjugate them first?” Ming Dong asked.

“The Carnage Mercenaries are still quite mysterious. I think we should first investigate their background to see if they have any support behind them, and if they do, we should see how large it is.” Dugu Feng proposed.

Ming Dong’s eyebrows narrowed together, “The Carnage



Mercenaries remain far too low-profile. Although they've been here for five years, the amount of information on them is ridiculously small. I had to expend an absurd amount of time and energy to find what I did. That's not even probing about their background. I think that only the major powers of the Cloud Capital know about them, but I don't know much about those powers. If we want to learn more, it won't be easy."

"Fine then, that's enough discussion. The Carnage Mercenaries are extremely strange. Nothing more needs to be said about that. We should pay them a visit and see if there's a chance we learn anything about them." Jian Chen spoke.

After that, the group left the inn. They rode away on their Class 3 Magical Beasts, headed toward the courtyards where the Carnage Mercenaries stayed.

## Chapter 580: Subjugation (One)

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Following a brief moment of time later, Jian Chen and his entourage arrived at the courtyards where the Carnage Mercenaries were located. The building the Carnage Mercenaries lived in wasn't very small, but there had been no attempt made to clean the building at all. The simple doors were closed shut and had a layer of dust to them. At a glance, anyone would know that the area had not been swept in a very long time. Several footsteps could be seen right in front of the gates as well.

Jian Chen surveyed the courtyards for a while before chuckling, "I don't know if the Carnage Mercenaries are too lazy to clean or if they're lazy in general, but the fact that their doorfront is so dirty is quite unique."

"The Carnage Mercenaries are far more secretive than we thought. If they were like the other powers in this city, then they would have kept their doorfront far cleaner than this." Ming Dong replied in amazement.

"Why don't we go in and take a look." Jian Chen suggested.

One by one, they filed into the courtyards with their magical beast mounts while Dugu Feng swiftly strode forward to knock on the heavy gates.

Not long after, the gates began to open slowly to reveal a forty year old male. The man was bald, but his eyes were piercingly sharp and there was a very malevolent scar on his face that added

to his intimidation factor.

Suspicious, the man's eyes glanced over the young women in front of the gates before speaking with an impassive voice, "Who are you?"

"We are members of the Flame Mercenaries here today to pay a visit." Jian Chen responded with a smile. He cupped his hands with practiced ease.

"The Flame Mercenaries?" The man muttered under his breath as his eyebrows furrowed together. This was a foreign name to him, and there was no faction called the Flame Mercenaries from what he knew about the Cloud Capital.

The man studied Jian Chen and the others a second time before his face darkened. "It is a rather inconvenient time for our Carnage Mercenaries to be receiving any guests, so if you could please return home." As he spoke, the man's head started to retreat back behind the door while he was closing it. Even as he tried to do so, he found that the door would not budge.

Dugu Feng's hand was stopping the door from moving even the slightest inch, preventing the bald man from closing the door.

A sharp glare made its way into the bald man's eyes as he saw this. "Sire, what is the meaning of this?" He questioned with a heavy expression.

Smiling, Jian Chen replied, “Is this how the Carnage Mercenaries treat visitors when they come to visit?” Walking straight in, he opened the next set of doors and headed into the inner courtyards.

Startled, the man moved to stop Jian Chen from heading further in. He also said, “Sire, this is the territory of the Carnage Mercenaries. If you continue to act in such an impetuous manner, then do not blame me for my rudeness.” His warning was clear and loud enough for the other sentries in the area to hear.

At least twenty men came running in from every direction, gathering in the courtyards. Each one of them had a penetrating glare that honed in on Jian Chen and the others with murderous intent that was filled with hostility.

Seeing the malicious expressions on everyone’s faces, Ming Dong and Dugu Feng revealed looks of disdain.

“The captain of our Flame Mercenaries personally came here to visit your Carnage Mercenaries; that much in itself is already a great honor. Yet, not only do you not reciprocate that kindness, you also turn us away at your door. Is that how your Carnage Mercenaries treat guests? Hurry up and call your captain at once!” Ming Dong sneered. The power of an Earth Saint Master came exploding forth from his body all at once. It filled the entire courtyard with a dominating presence and caused each of the Carnage Mercenaries to take a step back in shock. Straight away, even more of the mercenaries came running out from within the courtyards.

“Hahaha, if there are guests, then our Carnage Mercenaries will

definitely welcome them with open arms. Please forgive my subordinates for not understanding that. I hope that you will forgive me for my negligence as well and that you won't take this slight too seriously."

Suddenly, a clear and crisp laughter could be heard coming from in front of them as three men with luxurious-looking robes came striding into the open area. The one who had spoken was the one in the middle. This man was about forty years in age and was rather handsome in looks. He had all five features still on his pale face, and his sharp eyebrows did nothing to hide the twinkling light in his eyes. His smile was filled with warmth and friendliness that left a favorable impression of him.

On his left was yet another middle-aged man that did not vary too much in age from him. This man wore an expensive white robe that was rather regal. A seemingly feral presence could be barely detected radiating from his body; a feeling like this gave off the feeling of a wolf hidden under a sheep's skin. Something about him was off.

On his right was an elderly man approaching his seventies. His face was covered with wrinkles and half of his white hair was already gone so that very little remained on his rather ruined head. A sight like that made him look like he would keel over at any moment and die.

Despite his looks, the elder's eyes flashed brightly with spirit and with unbelievable depth. It was almost as if a fog of smoke covered his eyes since one would not be able to see what he was thinking.

“Captain!”

“Captain!”

“We pay our respects to captain and the vice-captains!”

Straight away, the twenty or so Carnage Mercenaries began to salute the three men with eyes that reflected their worship.

Stopping in front of Jian Chen, the middle-aged man’s eyes landed on both Dugu Feng and Ming Dong. They were both standing right behind Jian Chen. Finally, his eyes moved to Jian Chen before he smiled and cupped his hands together, “This one is the captain of the Carnage Mercenaries, Zhan Tian. These two men next to me are my vice-captains, Shan Xiong and Mu Chi.”

Jian Chen’s eyes studied the three while simultaneously cupping his hands in return. “This one is called Jian Chen, captain of the Flame Mercenaries. This person here is Ming Dong, the vice-captain, and this is Dugu Feng, an elder of my Flame Mercenaries...”

When Zhan Tian heard Ming Dong’s name, his mind found it rather familiar as if he had heard it before. However, he paid it no mind since he had to greet the guests. Thus, he put the thought away for the time being. Putting up an amiable smile, he began to escort the group in, “Haha, please come in. We can talk inside.”

Jian Chen and the others were escorted by Zhan Tian into the

inner halls, which were simple in decoration and did not at all resemble the halls of a place of a strong faction.

After a small discussion between Jian Chen and Zhan Tian, the two quickly got to the crux of the problem.

“Sire Zhan Tian, I can see that you and your mercenaries are all gathered inside and spend everyday cultivating with monster cores without ever going out. I can only assume that some family is behind yours, is that right?” Jian Chen didn’t hesitate to speak his thoughts at all.

Hearing Jian Chen’s statement, Zhan Tian had not been startled at all. It had been five years since he and his mercenaries had settled in this city, so what he and his mercenaries were doing in this building was already known as a public secret.

“Haha, brother Jian Chen, you are surely joking! My Carnage Mercenaries is only a small time group that relies only on me. What other family is there to support us?” Despite this, Zhan Tian displayed a small look of pain and what seemed to be misery.

Jian Chen had not expected to see such an expression on Zhan Tian’s face, but he immediately guessed that it was more likely than not that the Carnage Mercenaries had no one but themselves to rely upon.

With that thinking, Jian Chen immediately felt some happiness. “Sire Zhan Tian, this one didn’t come here for no reason. This time, I have a matter of business that I wished to discuss with

you.”

Zhan Tian’s face immediately grew solemn as he stared back at Jian Chen with bright eyes to await the new few words from him.

“Sire Zhan Tian, you are more than aware of the rules of the Tian Yuan Continent. The strong feed off the weak, and only the strong are worthy of earning even more power. But gaining power isn’t as easy as it sounds, it is a very long road with plenty of obstacles. Lose your footing even once and you might not ever recover.”

“So I came today this time to see if you would like to join our Flame Mercenaries. With our powers combined, we will definitely increase the strength of our group. Would sire Zhan Tian agree to such an endeavor?”

Hearing this, Zhan Tian and the others could only stare in abject shock at Jian Chen. Not a single one of them thought that Jian Chen would come visit them with this goal in mind.

The three of them quickly regained their wits. Zhan Tian and the elder Mu Chi were both very calm on the surface, but Shan Xiong was not as well-tempered as they were. A look of fury overcame his face as he glared at Jian Chen with all the anger he could muster.

“So you wish for our Carnage Mercenaries to submit to your Flame Mercenaries? Hah, how audacious of you. How could you find it in you to even say such words?” Shan Xiong furiously roared.



## Chapter 581: Subjugation (Two)

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Jian Chen smiled and cut in onto Shan Xiong before he could speak any longer. “I believe the three of you know that to become a major power on the Tian Yuan Continent requires both power and a strong patron. Your Carnage Mercenaries are indeed strong enough in the Cloud Capital to call yourselves a hegemon, but you are struggling to maintain that position. There are plenty of families or sects that are comparable to yours in this city, and the six families here are most especially strong in comparison. Even if they’re divided into six powers, they may as well hold hands as a symbol of how close they are. Should the time come for them to stand together against a common enemy, there won’t be a single faction within the city strong enough to fight them.”

Zhan Tian and Shan Xiong had said nothing at Jian Chen’s words and had a pensive look on their faces. Even Shan Xiong had found reason in Jian Chen’s words and grew somewhat subdued, but he still found it hard to suppress the anger on his face.

“Brother Jian Chen, I will have to admit that there is logic in what you say. Our Carnage Mercenaries may seem glorious to the city as one of the major powers here, but in our minds, we can only fear the six clans. Truly, no one would be able to go against their combined might if they join together. However, there are more to this city than the six clans; there are plenty of other considerable forces. If the six clans do indeed ally themselves against us, then not a single one of those factions will sit idly and await death to come for them, they too, will unite the others to fight.” Zhan Tian spoke calmly with an equally calm face. It was as if Jian Chen’s suggestion for the Carnage Mercenaries to submit to Jian Chen had not bothered him.

With his keen eyes and sharp mind, Zhan Tian had already figured that Jian Chen was not some ordinary person. Although he couldn't estimate his strength, he was able to see Ming Dong and Dugu Feng's strength as Earth Saint Masters very clearly due to the aura that was radiating off their bodies. The fact that these two Earth Saint Masters were subordinates to Jian Chen and sat behind him without a word had only added to Jian Chen's status, and so Zhan Tian found it prudent to treat him carefully.

"Sire Zhan Tian, there is logic to your words as well. Yet, that would only help maintain the Carnage Mercenaries' status within the Cloud Capital. Do you and your Carnage Mercenaries plan to stay within this piddling city forever, do you not yearn to expand into the outer world?" Jian Chen smiled.

"Hah, kid, your ambitions are grand, I give you that. Who hasn't wished to expand their might into the world? However, a feat like that is easier said than done. Without a tremendous amount of power, survival by itself will be hard. Do you think your Flame Mercenaries has that ability?" Shan Xiong sneered.

Confidently, Jian Chen nodded his head, "Correct, our Flame Mercenaries does have that ability."

"You braggart!" Shan Xiong rebuked with a taunting expression.

Zhan Tian's heart had skipped a beat. Observing Jian Chen thoughtfully for a moment, he finally said, "This world is a world where power is equal to respect. A veritable showcase of the strong

and where the weak are food for the strong. That is a rule that is ingrained deep within my body.” His voice left off after that sentence so that he could stare down Jian Chen with a serious expression, “Brother Jian Chen, having my Carnage Mercenaries enter your Flame Mercenaries is not an easy task. Would it be possible for you to tell me what power your Flame Mercenaries has, or what patron it is that supports you? Or at the very least, a direction you wish to expand in in the future.”

A victorious smile appeared on Jian Chen’s face at those words; he knew that Zhan Tian was more or less won over. All he needed was proof of power, and the Carnage Mercenaries would swear their allegiances. A development like this had let Jian Chen’s worries decrease by one.

A nervous expression appeared on Shan Xiong’s face as he realized Zhan Tian’s intentions, “Captain....”

But then Zhan Tian put a stop to Shan Xiong’s next words, “Shan Xiong, there’s no need to talk, I alone will make this decision.”

Biting his lips in unease, Shan Xiong finally pursed his lips together and sat there without a word.

“Sire Zhan Tian, the scale of our Flame Mercenaries will not be in the scope of your Carnage Mercenaries in numbers I fear. We have no strong power supporting us, as my Flame Mercenaries rely only on each other. But with time, the Flame Mercenaries will become the strongest in the Blue Wind Kingdom, and even the strongest power in this part of the continent.” Jian Chen spoke.

Furrowing his eyebrows, Zhan Tian questioned, “In the surrounding kingdoms to this area, it is perhaps the Changyang clan in the Gesun Kingdom that could claim the right to being the strongest around. There are none that would dare provoke them, but brother Jian Chen, do you mean to tell me that your flame Mercenaries can overcome the Changyang clan? Let us forego that topic for now and focus on the Blue Wind Kingdom. As of right now, there are still several Heaven Saint Masters that sit on top of the kingdom. Does your Flame Mercenaries have the power to deal with them? I don’t believe that the Heaven Saint Masters of this kingdom will allow you to expand your influence by the sidelines.”

Jian Chen gave a smile of contempt, “Worry not. If the strongest of the Blue Wind Kingdom really does try to trouble my Flame Mercenaries, then even if they send the Heaven Saint Masters, my Flame Mercenaries will see that none of them will return alive. The Changyang clan in the Gesun Kingdom is something you will never need to worry about, for it is an impossibility for a conflict to ever arise between them and I.”

A flash of light appeared on Zhan Tian’s eyes, “Did you originate from the Gesun Kingdom? Or is there some sort of connection between you and the Changyang clan?” At those words, Zhan Tian suddenly realized something and swung his head to look at the silent Ming Dong to the side with shock. “Ming Dong? Is that your name? Are you the very same Ming Dong from the Gesun Kingdom that used a Heaven Tier Battle Skill to wound a Heaven Saint Master?”

A toothy smile appeared on Ming Dong’s face as he responded, “Correct, that person is me. I didn’t imagine that even captain

Zhan Tian would know of my little name. It is a humbling experience.”

Zhan Tian, Mu Chi, and Shan Xiong had sucked in a deep breath when they heard Ming Dong confirm his identity. Giving each other a thunderstruck look, they turned back to Ming Dong with a whole new opinion of him.

They all knew that this youth right in front of them wasn't even thirty years old but he was already a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master. Becoming a Heaven Saint Master was merely just another step away, and this Ming Dong was also in possession of a Heaven Tier Battle Skill, an item that any person would salivate at the mouth for. Furthermore, he had used this battle skill at one of the strongholds of the Gesun Kingdom to heavily injure a Heaven Saint Master. If not for his compatriot, then the Heaven Saint Master would have been known as the very first one to die at the hands of an Earth Saint Master.

“I had no idea that you would be the very same Ming Dong that injured a Heaven Saint Master. How blind I was, truly. And captain Jian Chen, that isn't your true name either I would imagine. If these old eyes of mine can guess correctly, then captain Jian Chen, you are the Imperial Protector of the Gesun Kingdom and the fourth master of the Changyang clan, Changyang Xiangtian.” This time, the speaker had been Mu Chi who stared at Jian chen with shock.

Jian Chen had not denied it and smiled in return, “You are an elder of tremendous intellect. I can only admire your keen eyes on being able to see me through.”

Smiling, Mu Chi spoke, “What person doesn’t know about the fourth master of the Changyang clan, and the power he wields? Rumors of how the Ming Dong that injured a Heaven Saint Master being close friends with the fourth master is already widespread even here. It is also known that Ming Dong frequents the Changyang Manor. Then Ming Dong suddenly joined the Flame Mercenaries and is willing to take a spot as a vice-captain rather than the captain spot. The captain is similarly a youth in his twenties, similar to the fourth master. With these few details, it is simple to conclude the identity of this captain. If I couldn’t do something like this, then I would be a very ignorant man.”

With a bright smile, Jian Chen spoke, “Then, would you be willing to join my Flame Mercenaries?”

The three men gave another look at one another with hesitation before Zhan Tian finally spoke, “Fourth master, please allow this one to impose a question.”

“Speak it then!” Jian Chen replied.

“If I may, when the fourth master established the Flame Mercenaries, who is it that we swear fealty to? The fourth master, or the Changyang clan?” Zhan Tian asked seriously.

“The Flame Mercenaries isn’t as complicated as you think it is. It is completely managed by me with there being no connection between the Changyang clan and the Flame Mercenaries. You can take the Flame Mercenaries to be a completely independent faction

without any allegiances.”

Zhan Tian hesitated once more as he spoke, “Fourth master, my Carnage Mercenaries would be willing to join with your Flame Mercenaries as part of a whole, but you must guarantee that my Carnage Mercenaries will be managed by me.”

“I can agree to that. The Carnage Mercenaries will remain under you three as you see fit. I won’t interfere with any of your internal affairs, but I hope that you will make sure to act in the best interest of the entire Flame Mercenaries and listen when I call upon you.” Jian Chen didn’t hesitate to agree to Zhan Tian’s request.

“Then that’s fine. If that’s all, then my Carnage Mercenaries will join with your Flame Mercenaries. I trust that this will be the most sensible choice for us to make.” Zhan Tian laughed carefreely. Although he knew that he would be swearing fealty to the Flame Mercenaries, he didn’t seem to mind it all too much.

Jian Chen had felt rather happy at this rather easy process of subjugation of the Flame Mercenaries as well. “Worry not, in a short amount of time, the Flame Mercenaries will shake the entire continent with its name.”

After the major discussions had finally reached an end, Jian Chen did not stay much longer within the courtyards. After agreeing to meet tomorrow morning at the inn to discuss some more, Jian Chen and the others left the Carnage Mercenaries.

When Jian Chen and them left, Shan Xiong spoke to Zhan Tian

with an unwilling expression, “Captain, are we really going to submit to the Carnage Mercenaries so easily?”

Letting out a sigh, Mu Chi responded with dim eyes, “Shan Xiong, forget your past status for now. At the current moment, joining the Flame Mercenaries gives us not only a chance, but a chance to return.”

“Mu Chi is correct. Shan Xiong, you must look at the long-term benefits. Joining the Flame Mercenaries is an opportunity that rarely comes by. It is by no means a demeaning trait to our statuses. Despite the Flame Mercenaries not being too large, as long as Changyang Xiangtian is there, then it will definitely become a major power within the area.” Zhan Tian spoke. “Changyang Xiangtian was able to become a Heaven Saint Masters in his twenties. That alone speaks wonders of his perverse talent at cultivation. I am fully convinced that Changyang Xiangtian will ascend into the higher realms any given day now, and with such a person leading the Flame Mercenaries, it would be impossible for the mercenaries to not flourish. This’ll make our own development that much easier, it isn’t easy to become a Heaven Saint Master after all.”



## Chapter 582: A Surge In Power

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With the subjugation of the Carnage Mercenaries going exceedingly well, Jian Chen and the group had been very happy on their path back home.

On the second morning, the three leaders of the Carnage Mercenaries met up with Jian Chen at the inn they were staying as they had agreed upon the day before. And so they begun to discuss once more about business.

“The next step in my plans is the Bloodthorn Mercenaries, the Bloodrose Mercenaries, and the Feral mercenaries. They are the groups I wish to bring into our folds, and since you three have stayed within the Cloud Capital for so long, you must know plenty about them. Would you please tell us what would be prudent to know as we plan?” Jian Chen asked Zhan Tian and the other two.

Mu Chi had been the first to speak from the three, “The Feral Mercenaries have an extremely close bond with the lord of the Cloud Capital. If you wish to force them into submission, it would require a tremendous amount of power. The Bloodrose and the Bloodthorn Mercenaries on the other hand is much more simpler. From my perspective, you should have those two submit first.”

“I agree. Subjugating the Bloodrose and Bloodthorn Mercenaries will be a far easier task than the Feral Mercenaries. Since the captain of the Bloodthorn Mercenaries is infatuated with the captain of the Bloodrose Mercenaries, we should first target the Bloodrose Mercenaries. As long as we get them to submit, then the Bloodthorn Mercenaries will follow shortly afterwards.” Zhan

Tian agreed.

Jian Chen nodded his head after listening to their reasoning, “If it is as you say, then we should first subjugate the Bloodrose Mercenaries. Why don’t you three follow me over there?”

“The three of us have quite the friendship with their captain, Jasmine. It’d be an easier task if we advise her.” Zhan Tian spoke.

After the discussion was over, Jian Chen and the others left the inn and rode on their mounts towards where the Bloodrose Mercenaries were.

It was about thirty or so kilometers between the Bloodrose Mercenaries and where Jian Chen had started off from. With the abundant amount of people crowding the streets, Jian Chen’s group had to cross through on their mounts at a slow and careful pace. By the time they arrived, a decent amount of time had already passed.

Like the Carnage Mercenaries, the Bloodrose Mercenaries lived within a giant courtyard. But the similarities had ended there. The courtyards of the Bloodrose Mercenaries had been spotless without any dust to be seen. Two sentries could even be seen standing by the gates.

Because the three leaders of the Carnage Mercenaries were seen with Jian Chen, the sentries by the gate had not dared to stop them. Immediately letting out a courteous salute to the group, the guards lead them into the courtyards while sending someone

ahead to notify the captain.

And so Jian Chen and his group were seated by the inner halls while they waited for the captain of the Bloodrose Mercenaries to arrive.

They hadn't had to wait for too long before a heroic looking woman came walking out from within the building.

“Haha, Zhan Tian, Mu Chi, Shan Xiong, what winds brought you here to my humble abode today? For you three to come to my Bloodrose Mercenaries, my home has been blessed by your presence.”

Looking up towards the source of the voice, Jian Chen saw a woman around the age of thirty or so come walking in. She was beautiful in appearance and quite graceful in her movements. This woman wore a dark-green skirt with an equally dark green blouse. Tying up her hair behind her head was a single bowtie that added to her allure.

“Haha, Captain Jasmine, your words are far too serious to be wasted on the likes of us. It has been two years since we last met, but since then, you have grown far more beautiful.” Zhan Tian laughed as he bowed with cupped hands towards her.

Smiling in return, Jasmine's eyes swiveled to look at Jian Chen and the people behind him. “Might I inquire who you might be?”

Jian Chen cupped his hands in salute and smiled. “This one is Jian Chen, captain of the Flame Mercenaries.”

“Flame Mercenaries?” Jasmine spoke with a soft voice, “Brother Jian Chen, you are not a native to the Cloud Capital I take it.”

“Correct. I am not from the Cloud Capital.” Jian Chen admitted before continuing onwards, “Captain Jasmine, I am here today in hopes that a proposal can be made between your mercenary group and mine.”

Taking a seat at the table with the others, Jasmine stretched her arms lazily, “Then don’t stop your speech midway through and say it.”

Still smiling, Jian Chen spoke, “Then allow me to be frank. Captain Jasmine, I hope that your Bloodrose Mercenaries will join into my Flame Mercenaries.”

Jasmine had flown straight to her feet as soon as Jian Chen’s words registered in her mind. In an instant, her calm eyes had gained a fearsome glint to them as she stared Jian Chen down.

“What did you say?” Jasmine enunciated each word slowly and icily like the expression on her face.

“This one hopes that captain Jasmine will bring your Bloodrose Mercenaries into my Flame Mercenaries as a division of it.” Jian Chen repeated once more for her to hear.

The iciness in Jasmine's eyes kicked up a notch as she glared at Jian Chen. Seeing that it did not seem like he was joking, she shook her head with a cold smile, "Little brother, you shouldn't joke around with such a joke like that."

Jian Chen laughed in response, "But I am not joking. The Carnage Mercenaries have already joined up with my Flame Mercenaries. If captain Jasmine is not convinced, then please ask Zhan Tian, Mu Chi or Shan Xiong."

Startled by that response, Jasmine's eyes flew over to Zhan Tian and the other two who had only gave her a nod in confirmation.

Jasmine had been alarmed to an even greater detail by this confirmation. The Carnage Mercenaries were amongst the strongest within the Cloud Capital and had three Earth Saint Masters in their ranks. But now they suddenly joined with an unheard of mercenary group, that had been simply unbelievable.

"Impossible! Zhan Tian, Mu Chi, Shan Xiong, has your Carnage Mercenaries truly joined with the Flame Mercenaries?" Jasmine cried out involuntarily.

"Correct. Our Carnage Mercenaries have joined with the Flame Mercenaries. It is without a doubt the truth. It is our belief that should we join with the Flame Mercenaries, we will establish ourselves within the Tian Yuan Continent. No longer will we be sequestered to this small city and forced to hide like a turtle in its shell." Zhan Tian spoke calmly.

“Are the Flame Mercenaries that strong?” Jasmine asked again as she looked back to Jian Chen with confusion and disbelief.

“Captain Jasmine, may I ask what the highest level battle skill is within your possession?” Jian Chen asked.

Although she was suspicious of why Jian Chen had asked such a question, she decided to answer honestly. “Two Advanced Human Tier Battle Skills!”

“Captain Jasmine, allow me to tell you a benefit to joining my Flame Mercenaries. For every person that joins my Flame Mercenaries, then they will be given a Primary Earth Tier Battle Skill to learn free of charge as long as they are an Earth Saint Master.” Jian Chen smiled.

Jasmine’s eyes had immediately lit up at the sound of that. An Earth Tier Battle Skill was very sparse within the Blue Wind Kingdom. At the current moment, only the experts that reigned at the top had an Earth Tier Battle Skill.

She had not been the only one to be surprised. Zhan Tian and the other two suddenly felt their heart rates skyrocket upwards and their breathing had started to come in shorter bursts.

But it had been the next sentence of Jian Chen that caused the greatest amount of shock.

“In the future should your group contribute greatly to the Flame Mercenaries with the utmost devotion, then I will impart an Advanced Earth Tier Battle Skill or perhaps even a Heaven Tier Battle Skill.” Jian Chen spoke.

“What! A Heaven Tier Battle Skill? You have one of those!” Jasmine had completely lost her composure at that as she cried out in shock. Both of her red phoenix eyes had grown wide with disbelief.

“Correct. I am in possession of not just one Heaven Tier Battle Skill, but multiple of them. So, how about it captain Jasmine. Will you consider joining my Flame Mercenaries? In the case that you do with the utmost loyalty and a great enough contribution, then I will be more than happy to award you with a Heaven Tier Battle Skill. This is something that people can only yearn for in their dreams.” Jian Chen smiled. In this moment, he only wished to quickly expand his Flame Mercenaries. For the sake of improving the backbone of the group, he couldn’t afford to be stingy and would thus treat everyone equally.

The enticement that Heaven Tier Battle Skill would naturally be tremendous. Unless someone already had multiple Heaven Tier Battle Skills, not a single person would be able to resist the allure and temptation it brought. This time, Jasmine had only taken a moment to think before agreeing to Jian Chen’s request to join the Bloodrose Mercenaries into the Flame Mercenaries.

After the subjugation of the Bloodrose Mercenaries were done, Jian Chen, Zhan Tian, and Jasmine began to discuss the next course of action. It was only until late in the afternoon that they

left the courtyards with Jasmine leaving with them.

Traveling once more on the magical beast mounts through the streets, they had attracted a fair amount of attention now that the leaders of the Carnage Mercenaries and the captain of the Bloodrose Mercenaries were together; and with a group of youngsters no less. That much had been more than enough for the people to gossip and spread the news back to the insiders of the city.

But Jian Chen and the others hadn't cared at all for this. Riding on their mounts, they finally arrived at the grounds of the Bloodthorn Mercenaries after some time.

The captain of the Bloodthorn Mercenaries had been a very straightforward person named Ha Ni with a true infatuation with the captain of the Bloodrose Mercenaries. Despite her indifferent treatment of him, his love for her did not decrease at all. The very moment when he heard that the Bloodrose Mercenaries had joined with the Flame Mercenaries, he didn't hesitate to join the Bloodthorn Mercenaries as well in hopes that his relationship with Jasmine could be furthered another step.

In short, the subjugation of the Bloodthorn Mercenaries had gone by swiftly and smoothly. Not even a cup of tea later, Jian Chen had already entered them into his group without even adding a beneficial reason to butter them up with.

And now, Jian Chen had collected the Carnage Mercenaries, the Bloodrose mercenaries, and the Bloodthorn Mercenaries into a single entity under the Flame Mercenaries. In two short days, the



Flame Mercenaries had skyrocketed in power causing no small joy to Jian Chen. As the captain of the Flame Mercenaries, this could only be described as a surge of power.

However. There was no such thing as a wall that could prevent wind entirely. News of the merge between the three mercenary groups had made its way to the six clans and even the mansion of the city lord. Such a piece of information had caused all of them to grow nervous. The combined might of the three mercenary groups meant at least five Earth Saint Masters joined together. For the six clans in comparison, that was a formidable power that even they found difficulty in matching.

It had been the six clans that had been the most nervous of them all in the city. A meeting had instantly been called for with the head of each of the six clans to discuss what to do next.

# Chapter 583: The Movement Of Six Major Clans

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Within a secret room located at a secret location, the leaders of the six clans of the Cloud Capital were gathered around a table with serious faces.

“I believe everyone is now aware that the Bloodthorn Mercenaries, the Bloodsting Mercenaries, and the Carnage Mercenaries have all joined together to form a single mercenary group. This to us, is undoubtedly an unfavorable situation.” An elder spoke.

“That is correct. With the three mercenary groups joining together, they now have at least five Earth Saint Masters. A force like that is comparable to the unison of our six clans almost. In my perspective, we must take action now or else we will not like the horrendous aftermath that will come next.” A white-robed man in his middling ages spoke seriously.

“Taking the first course of action is indeed the right choice. But we first must find out the exact reason for why this impromptu coalition has happened. For what reason have they renamed themselves to the Flame Mercenaries? From what my informants tell me, the captains of the Carnage Mercenaries and the Bloodthorn Mercenaries were walking behind a youngster. Perhaps it was because of that youth they were subjugated?” An elder spoke.

“Then it would appear that this youth is not your average youth. However, no matter what status he holds, we must ensure that he

doesn't expand his power any more into this city. In two short days, this youth was able to combine three large mercenary groups together. That alone is proof enough that his ambitions are beyond what they should be. Three groups won't be enough to satisfy him I bet. If we allow him to gather even more strength in this city, then his next targets will be us soon enough."

"I can agree with that sentiment. If we continue to sit around like this, then we will ultimately be digging our own graves. When the moment comes for the Flame Mercenaries to overcome us in power, then the next sacrifice to be annexed will be us. We must take action now without any time to spare."

And so the six men descended into a fierce discussion. The rate of growth that the Flame Mercenaries gained was more than enough to cause them all to feel restless.

An elder with white hair suddenly gave a light cough. "Gentleman. This old man has thought of a way to stop the Flame Mercenaries from growing any stronger. If the Flame Mercenaries wishes to annex all of the stronger factions in the Cloud Capital, then why can't we do the same? This way, our six clans can unite to form a single alliance and have any and all factions that wish to preserve their status and name to join with us for the time being. In the case that the other side begins their encroachment, then we will have enough men to start a counter-defense."

"Yes, I agree. This is a very good way to deal with the growth of the Flame Mercenaries. With their current strength, it will mean an unbelievable amount of damages on our part if we try to act against them now. But if we unite everyone, then we'll have

enough people no matter how much the Flame Mercenaries try to expand. And at the same time, we'll have more than enough manpower to eliminate the Flame Mercenaries while minimizing our own damages."

"Yes, that seems like the best course of action. However, I don't believe the Flame Mercenaries will for sure try to fight against the entire Cloud Capital. Still, that does not mean we should not try to prevent his growth. Otherwise, it will be hard to do so in the future. For now, we should wait and see what they do next. In the case he does try something, we will have to be ready to stop him."

"Then we shall implement this course of action straight away. Time cannot be wasted, let us all return home to make the proper preparations."

A short amount of time later, the six clans had all a plan to counteract against the Flame Mercenaries. The growth of the Flame Mercenaries had been far too fast for their liking if they had been able to subjugate three different mercenary groups in two short days. It was a fearful thing for the six clans. None of them wanted to be annexed by any single power, so they had been more than willing to suppress the Flame Mercenaries at a moment's notice.

The response from the six clans had been very fast. As soon as their discussion were over, each one of the clans had immediately got into contact with every single faction they knew. Since these factions were also aware of the situation with the Flame Mercenaries, not a single one of them had hesitated to join with the six clans to form an alliance.

With even more people added into the group, the alliance had quickly expanded. As of that current moment, there were at least ten Earth Saint Masters in the alliance along with the ones from the six clans.

News of the six clans joining together to form an alliance had made its way to Jian Chen's ears as well, but he had not been concerned in the slightest. In his eyes, it was a futile attempt that served absolutely no use.

On the second day, Jian Chen had gathered the captain of the Bloodrose Mercenaries, Jasmine, the captain of the Bloodthorn Mercenaries, Ha Ni, and the captain of the Carnage Mercenaries, Zhan Tian and his two vice-captains together with Jian Chen standing in front of them. By his side was a worn out manual.

Pushing the manual towards them, Jian Chen spoke, "Now that you've joined the Flame Mercenaries, I will fulfill my end of the bargain. In front of me are five Primary Earth Tier Battle Skills. Choose whichever one fits you most. In the future when someone from your group becomes an Earth Saint Master, then let them learn from this manual. In the future, if your contributions are good enough while also maintaining a loyal attitude to the Flame Mercenaries, then I will impart a Heaven Tier Battle Skill to you."

"Thank you captain!" Seeing the manuals on the table, each one of the captains had flames in their eyes as they gave their thanks before immediately choosing from one of the five battle skills.

Out of the five of them, the captain of the Bloodthorn Mercenaries had been the most excited. He had joined the Flame Mercenaries solely because of Jasmine so he hadn't realized that joining the Flame Mercenaries would have such a great bonus like this. When Jian Chen had talked about the Heaven Tier Battle Skill, his own heart was nearly about to leap out from his chest.

Jian Chen's actions there had been an undoubtedly good plan to entice the hearts of people. With an Earth Tier Battle Skill, Jian Chen would cement the feelings of loyalty they had for the Flame Mercenaries while also eliminating any ill will they might have for joining.

Seeing the excited expressions on everyone's faces, Jian Chen smiled in response. This was a satisfactory reaction that he expected to see. After a short while, he spoke, "Our Flame Mercenaries won't stay too long in the Cloud Capital. Perhaps in a few days, we'll leave this place, so prepare your groups to move out of the city."

"Captain, I have a question to ask. Does the Flame Mercenaries have a place to stay? Where might it be? It can't be possible to have this many people drifting this way and that." Ha Ni asked.

With a pensive expression, Jian Chen spoke, "As of right now, there is no determined spot. Right now, we are just expanding the power of the Flame Mercenaries. After we subjugate the rest of the Cloud Capital and then the rest of the Blue Wind Kingdom, we'll expand outwards into the surrounding kingdoms."

This time, both Ha Ni and Jasmine were startled to hear Jian

Chen's plan. Neither of the two had thought that he would be thinking on such a large scale. To annex the entire Blue Wind Kingdom of its mercenary groups and then the ones from the surrounding kingdoms was not what they expected to be his goal.

“That concludes our discussion for now. Our next step is for you five to subjugate the powers with the Earth Saint Masters in the name of our Flame Mercenaries.” Jian Chen spoke. With Zhan Tian and the other four, there was no need for Jian Chen to personally take part. Those five would be more than enough.

With that order, the five of them walked away.

After they left, Jian Chen took the tiger cub who was rolling around on the bed into his arms and began to stroke its furry head as he started to think about what the next plan would be.

At the current moment, all Jian Chen wanted to do was to expand the powers of his Flame Mercenaries. For the sake of his promise with Kendall, Jian Chen would make the Flame Mercenaries the strongest mercenary group on the continent. This was to say that not only was this a promise, it was a goal that Jian Chen would fulfill.

Aside from him, there were no other Heaven Saint Masters in the Flame Mercenaries. But that fact was not enough to make Jian Chen concerned. As the leader, he was more than aware that the Flame Mercenaries was in its initial stage--something like a child still and filled with superficial power. Right now, it wasn't even on the same level of power as the Blue Wind Kingdom, but with time, power could accumulated slowly.

Jian Chen wouldn't be able to say that he would be able to trust these newcomers to the Flame Mercenaries on how loyal they were. It would be no exaggeration to say that aside from Dohre and the others, Jian Chen trusted no one else--Zhan Tian and the others included.

But trust wasn't something Jian Chen needed from them at this current moment. They were new blood to the mercenaries, and Jian Chen was convinced that the more the Flame Mercenaries grew, the more and more these people will begin to develop loyalty for them. Sooner or later, everyone will feel like the mercenary group was family. Kai Er and the others felt that way especially.

Two hours had past before Jian Chen had realized he had been pondering to himself within his room. It was only when a knock on the door was heard that Jian Chen was snapped out from his thoughts.

Looking to the door, Jian Chen spoke out, "Come in!"

The door opened, revealing Ming Dong and Dugu Feng standing shoulder to shoulder as they walked in. Ming Dong was wearing a black robe fitted slightly for battle while Dugu Feng wore his customary fire-like red robes.

"Jian Chen. Zhan Tian and the others have come into trouble. When they went to subjugate a sect, they just happened to come into contact with the people from the six clans and henned in the grounds of the sect. As of right now, they have no way out." Ming



Dong spoke with a slightly unsightly look.

Jian Chen's eyebrows furrowed together at this piece of news. With a slight mutter to himself, he spoke, "This was not within my expectations. I had thought that the six clans would be slower to respond."

"Jian Chen, if the six clans have mobilized themselves against us, then we may as well go all out to subjugate them all at once. There's no need to run here and there to pick them off one by one. But to do that, we'll need to have you meet them in person. I'd be enough to deal with most of them, but they too have people of my same level of strength, meaning if we were to fight, it would become a battle to the death rather than submission. And if there are any Heaven Saint Masters behind them, then they won't dare to fight back even so." Ming Dong continued to speak.

## Chapter 584: Fealty From The Six Major Clans (One)

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Thinking for a moment, Jian Chen spoke, “Very well. If the six clans have come to our doors to stop us, then we will get two birds with a single arrow and subjugate them all at once. Take me there, we’ll head over now.”

And so after, Jian Chen called for You Yue and Tie Ta to accompany him out from the inn and onto their Class 3 Magical Beast mounts to ride away.

At this moment within a large courtyard in the Cloud Capital, hundreds of men were gathered within the enclosure to surround a group of fifty so tightly that not even water could leak out.

From within these fifty people, there were five different figures that were especially prominent in everyone’s eyes. There were perhaps only a small handful of people that wouldn’t know these five; captain Ha Ni of the Bloodthorn Mercenaries, captain Jasmine of the Bloodrose Mercenaries, captain Zhan Tian of the Carnage Mercenaries, and his two vice captains Shan Xiong and Mu Chi.

Jasmine and Ha Ni were both staring heavily at the surrounding people--their eyes had most especially been focused on the dozen people standing in front. The both of them had grim expressions as they registered just who these people were. Each one of them were all titular figures of the Cloud Capital and were experts of the Earth Saint Master realm. Each one of them had been Earth Saint Masters for far longer than Ha Ni and Jasmine and could easily

fight them two to one with an advantage.

Zhan Tian, Mu Chi, and Shan Xiong were all relaxed despite the situation they were in. Each one of them were calm despite being surrounded, and instead of being concerned like Jasmine and Ha Ni were, they had instead looked at the group with a cold sneer as if their enemies were beneath their notice.

It had taken a long period of time before Zhan Tian took a single step powerful step forward. “Gentleman, what is the meaning of this? Do you wish to start a war with the Flame Mercenaries?”

“Ai, Zhan Tian, Mu Chi, Shan Xiong, Jasmine, Ha Ni, we may not be very close to one another, but we have talked with one another before. It was an unexpected piece of information to hear that your group of all people would throw away your good position of captains to become the lackeys of an unknown mercenary group like the Flame Mercenaries, how is that worth it?” An elder spoke with regret as if he felt that it was a complete shame that these five people would willingly work another.

“Zhan Tian, Jasmine, Ha Ni, you three should withdraw from the Flame Mercenaries. Think about the glory you had as captains. What need is there to be a lackey, this is a complete insult to your status.” Another man spoke.

“Yes, Zhan Tian. Your Carnage Mercenaries were amongst the strongest within the Cloud Capital. But now you’ve completely thrown away your entire group to the whims of another to use, is that not an unworthy use of them?”

“There’s still time to go back. With the combined power of the Cloud Capital, we’ll definitely be able to drive out the evil...”

Practically every single person there were hoping that the five Earth Saint Masters would leave the Flame Mercenaries. Unless there was no other choice, not a single one of them wanted to engage in battle with the five of them. If one did happen, then there would undoubtedly be plenty of deaths, and those five Earth Saint Masters were definitely figures to be reckoned with.

“That’s enough, you should all stop talking.” Mu Chi waved his hand in irritation. “We have joined with the Flame Mercenaries for glory. Don’t even bother trying to use your cheap words to instigate us. It is futile.”

“Aye. I, Ha Ni, rejoice at the fact to join with the Flame Mercenaries! Trying to fan the flames of resentment is a waste of your energy and our time, so forget about it.” The captain of the Bloodthorn Mercenaries spoke. After joining the Flame Mercenaries, he was finally able to obtain the Earth Tier Battle Skill that he had always dreamed of. Such a prize had excited him to no end and had caused him to feel extremely devoted to the Flame Mercenaries.

Each one of the figures from the six clans grew dark in the face as they listened to Mu Chi and Ha Ni. “It seems that the poison has already taken root within your body. There is no saving you now.”

“Hehe. I figured that us joining with the Flame Mercenaries

would have nothing to do with you. To each their own they say. So when did our actions have to be managed by you?” Zhan Tian laughed.

Everyone could only stay in silence after hearing Zhan Tian’s words.

No longer even pretending to bother with the six heads, Zhan Tian turned to the elder by the side, “Lord Griff, if I may ask about your thoughts on our proposal. If you join our Flame Mercenaries, then the rewards you will receive will be far beyond what you could possibly gather within a single lifetime. It is a path that has no end in potential!”

“Impudence! Zhan Tian, Griff is already a part of our alliance, and yet you still dare try to pull him into your own. Do you even have eyes for our alliance?” Another elder spoke with a heavy expression. Zhan Tian was growing more and more out of control the more he represented the Flame Mercenaries, and now he was completely unafraid of them all. This result had made them all feel rather uneasy.

There had to be something amiss here!

“I didn’t think that this place would be so lively. Every single faction within the Cloud Capital is here it seems.” Suddenly, a loud but clear voice could be heard from the outside as several men and women suddenly came walking into view. They had an air of regality to them that was unlike the ordinary air to most.

Zhan Tian and the other four had lit up when they saw these figures--they could see that it was Jian Chen and the others.

In an instant, everyone's eyes flew over to land onto Jian Chen's body with a look of extreme displeasure.

"Who are you?" A middle-aged man barked at Jian Chen's group.

"He is the captain of our Flame Mercenaries!" Before Jian Chen had even said anything, Zhan Tian had introduced him first. He knew that Jian Chen was a Heaven Saint Master with unlimited potential, so he would naturally want to curry favor with him.

Everyone had looked flabbergasted at Jian Chen when they heard Zhan Tian's introduction. Shocked at the news, not a single one of them had thought that the one responsible for annexing three of the strongest mercenary groups in the Cloud Capital would be a youth that was barely in his twenties.

"And here I thought that the captain of the Flame Mercenaries would be some sort of strong burly man. Not once did I suspect that it would actually be a green horned brat! How ridiculous!" A black-robed elder mocked.

"Three of our Cloud Capital's strongest mercenary groups willingly kneeled down in front of a wet behind the ears brat like this? My my, how shameful that is." Another thin-looking elder shook his head with a sigh.

Jian Chen's eyes grew icy for a split-moment before he barked out, "Ming Dong, Dugu Feng!"

Understanding what Jian Chen was asking them to do, Ming Dong and Dugu Feng immediately charged forward with their Saint Weapons out and ready to strike. Saint Force billowed out from their weapons as it stabbed out at the two.

The two elders that had spoken earlier were Earth Saint Masters as well, meaning that their reactions to Dugu Feng and Ming Dong had been swift. Straight away, they had taken out their Saint Weapons to block the strike.

The sword in Dugu Feng's hand grew fiery as it approached his target, and with the sound of thunder striking metal, his sword clashed against the other with a large explosion. The elder he had clashed with had been forced back by the impact.

"Third Cycle Earth Saint Master!" The man had cried out in shock. But then the next words that came out from Dugu Feng's mouth had shocked him even more.

"Earth Tier Battle Skill--Heaven Splitter Earth Breaker!" A tremendous amount of fire billowed out from his giant sword as he lifted it upwards. With a mighty heave, Dugu Feng brought the sword down onto the elder to cleave him in two.

The elder had wanted to dodge when a fierce amount of pressure suddenly locked him into place. Feeling as if he had been bogged down by some sort of quagmire and had a thousand pound weight

forced onto him, the elder had been rendered helpless to move. With no other choice, the elder could only make use of his Human Tier Battle Skill to try and defend himself against the Earth Tier Battle Skill.

A Human Tier Battle Skill was like striking a stone with an egg when faced against an Earth Tier Battle Skill. As expected, the elder's body had been knocked flying away with blood coming out from his mouth after sustaining a tremendous amount of damage.

At the same time, the thinner looking elder had been grievously wounded by Ming Dong as well. Collapsing twenty meters away, he landed back down onto the ground with such force that a series of spiderweb-like cracks appeared all around him. The elder's face was white as if devoid of blood, and compared to the one that fought against Dugu Feng, this elder was far more injured.

Ming Dong had not used any battle skill, but because of his strength as a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master, he was an extremely terrifying existence. A Second Cycle Earth Saint Master like this elder would be easily defeated by him.

Ming Dong and Dugu Feng's strength had completely startled the entire group, but they were not too afraid of the two just yet. There were over a dozen of them after all, and in numbers, they evidently had the advantage. With numbers, they could stifle even strength.

But the use of an Earth Tier Battle Skill by Dugu Feng had been something everyone salivated over. Each one of them had thus looked to Dugu Feng with a look of avarice that wasn't hidden at



all.

“Impudence! How dare you strike at our allies? Everyone, forward!” Suddenly, another elder had let out a loud shout as he charged at Dugu Feng with his Saint Weapon and an impassioned look in his eyes.

As soon as this elder spoke, the other remaining Earth Saint Masters had regained their wits and charged at Dugu Feng without fear of the consequences.

Jian Chen looked at the group charge towards Dugu Feng with a cold sneer, “How reckless!” Jian Chen’s hands clutched at the sky so as to gather the energy of the world. With a sudden push of his hands, Jian Chen let out a burst of explosive energy that howled mightily as if it was a dragon towards the group.

Not a single one of the Earth Saint Masters that had charged at Dugu Feng had enough time to react before the tide of energy had slammed against them. Their robes had completely disintegrated into dust from where the energy had struck while each one of them had been sent flying back. With blood coming out from their mouths, each person stumbled ruthlessly across the ground.

It had only been a brief moment where not even enough time had transpired for a breath to even form. But in just that small prolapse of time, over ten Earth Saint Masters had been injured so severely that they could only lay on the ground in pain.

In front of a Heaven Saint Master, an Earth Saint Master was an

extremely weak figure. There was not a chance for them to even be able to resist, and only Ming Dong was an exception.

# Chapter 585: Fealty From Six Major Clans (Two)

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There were several hundred people within the courtyards of the Griff clan, but in this moment, the entire area was completely devoid of conversation. Only the heavy breathing could be heard.

Every single one of them had stared at the ten or so Earth Saint Masters that had been knocked to the ground by the impact with wide-open eyes from disbelief.

Ha Ni and Jasmine had been surprised by Jian Chen's strength as well since they had no idea just how strong he was. And so even the two of them stared at Jian Chen in silent surprise for a long while.

With a single move, more than ten Earth Saint Masters had been heavily injured. Just what kind of monstrous strength was this?

"Wah! Cousin, you are really strong! Without any effort, even all these Earth Saint Masters were taken care of; is this the true might of a Heaven Saint Master? How amazing!" Suddenly, a loud but excited sound broke the silence that had descended upon the area. Bi Lian had cried out to Jian Chen with such elation that her face had gone red.

Heaven Saint Master! Those three words had been like a sledgehammer that slammed into everyone's chest and cause them to shiver violently. And now when they looked at Jian Chen, everyone was now appalled at the sight.

None of them could hardly dare to believe their eyes. The twenty something year old youth in front of them was....actually a Heaven Saint Master? A person like this was a golden existence even in the entire Blue Wind Kingdom. Even the king of the kingdom himself would have to treat Jian Chen with the utmost sincerity and manners.

Jasmine and Ha Ni had been dumbfounded in their glances at Jian Chen. It was only right now that they had realized this captain that they had been in contact with had been a Heaven Saint Master this entire time.

Within the entire Blue Wind Kingdom, there were most likely four Heaven Saint Masters left. And each one of them were unrivalled existences that none could even touch.

“So our captain was a Heaven Saint Master this entire time?!” Jasmine and Ha Ni had screamed out mentally. With that thought going around their minds, their hearts had begun to pound faster and faster so that it threatened to leap out from their chests.

The only ones that had managed to keep their cool other than Jian Chen and his group had been Zhan Tian and the other two vice-captains. Those three had already known about Jian Chen’s identity and hadn’t been shocked at all.

By now, the Earth Saint Masters that had been struck to the ground by Jian Chen had finally managed to climb back up to their feet. Such a simple task like that had been made a hundred times

more difficult from Jian Chen's strike. But now that they were up, the Earth Saint Masters could only look at Jian Chen with a completely different expression of shock and fear.

"You--you're a...a Heaven Saint Master!" A middle-aged man with black armor had cried out with a quavering voice--this man had the head of one of the six clans.

Still holding the white tiger cub in his hands next to his chest, Jian Chen stared down the heavily injured Earth Saint Masters with an icy glint in his eyes, but an expressionless look had been on his face as he spoke, "Since you have all decided to form an alliance with one another against my Flame Mercenaries, I will not let you off lightly. Submit to me and prosper, or oppose me and perish. Make your decision."

The dozen Earth Saint Masters had all looked unwell at his words, but not a single one of them dared to say anything in return. A Heaven Saint Master's strength was far too much to even fathom, and it was more than enough to force them all to remain quiet in fear. If a Heaven Saint Master wanted to kill them, then it would be as easily as killing an ant. Like how an ant wouldn't possibly have the strength to defend themselves against a human, these people wouldn't even have the strength to run away.

With his speech, Jian Chen had managed to bring silence back down onto the courtyards.

A moment later, an elderly man came walking forward before kneeling down in front of him and spoke out respectfully, "O' revered one, I am called Griff. My Griff clan would find it an honor

to serve as your hands and feet and joined into your Flame Mercenaries.”

This elder was an Earth Saint Master himself and was also the master of the courtyard they were all standing in.

Jian Chen smiled as he nodded his head, “Very well. My Flame Mercenaries won’t treat anyone unfairly.

“To be able serve your majesty would be a great honor for my Griff clan. What more could this one ask for?” Griff had spoken seriously. Joining the group a Heaven Saint Master was in was a dream come true for most. Not only did would they earn a mountain as a support, they would earn a symbol of power. While this had meant that they would lose their status as a power holder, joining the Flame Mercenaries would still elevate their status by a tremendous amount.

And so Jian Chen looked to the rest of the Earth Saint Masters. “Have you made your decision yet? I do not have all day to wait.”

Plenty of men had looked on in hesitance. Not all of them were like Griff and could throw away all that they built up for for the sake of having a mountain as support. Many of them had spent far too much time and blood to have what they had today, and so they were unwilling to bow their heads towards him.

You Yue could more or less see what each one of them was thinking about when she saw their hesitation. “Be at ease, upon joining the Flame Mercenaries, we will not strip you of your

authority. As long as you remain a part of our group, you will maintain the power you have now.” She spoke.

Everyone’s eyes had lit up at the sound of that and looked to Jian Chen for confirmation.

Smiling, Jian Chen replied, “Correct. Upon joining my Flame Mercenaries, I will not take away the authority you hold over your clans and sects. You may lead them as you would in the past; however, you will now place more emphasis on the benefit of the Flame Mercenaries. You will not do anything that will lead to the detriment of the Flame Mercenaries, or try to betray the Flame Mercenaries. If you do one of the such things, then I’m sure I won’t need to explain the consequences for you to figure out.” Jian Chen’s eyes gained a heavy glint as he spoke the last line.

“Very well then, my Solar sect will join your Flame Mercenaries then. I hope that you will not eat your words and allow me to keep jurisdiction over my sect.” An elder replied at last.

“But of course. This is a guarantee I am willing to make.” Jian Chen promised to help reassure everyone.

Having Jian Chen’s promise, the other leaders had no longer any more qualms. Even the head of the six clans had ultimately decided to join the Flame Mercenaries.

With everyone now willing to join his Flame Mercenaries, Jian Chen had been satisfied. Now that he had these men and their factions in his group, the Flame Mercenaries had grown

exponentially. Combined with Zhan Tian and the other four, the mercenary group now had twenty or so Earth Saint Masters.

And now, the Flame Mercenaries were a powerhouse to be reckoned with. Naturally, this was only in perspective to a small kingdom like the Blue Wind Kingdom. For the entire Tian Yuan Continent, they were still nothing more but a small child.

“When you go back, you will throw out your old signboard and replace it with the banners of the Flame Mercenaries.” Jian Chen had commanded.

“Yes!” Each of the leaders had replied out at once. They were all smart people, now that they were in the Flame Mercenaries, they knew where they stood.

“I will give you all some time to recover from your injuries. But make sure to take care of whatever needs to be done within your households, for as soon as you are all healed, we will be leaving the Cloud Capital.” Jian Chen spoke.

These words however had caused everyone to be startled.

“If we leave the Cloud Capital, then the power we’ve built up within this city will.....” One of the elders had been unwilling to leave behind the powerbase he had built up with his blood and sweat for so many years.

“A tiny amount of power like this is enough for you to be



reluctant? How short-sighted you are; follow our captain and he will guide you all to greatness. The power you all wield here in this tiny city pales in comparison to the future power our captain will bring us all!” Zhan Tian had barked out.

And so the doubt in everyone’s heart gradually began to melt away.

Now that Jian Chen had given them all their respective tasks, everyone had split ways to go off and do as they should. Not a single one of them had remained behind--even Ming Dong, Zhan Tian, and the others had left as well.

Now that the major six clans and several other factions had been recruited into his Flame Mercenaries, there wasn’t anything else within the Cloud Capital that appealed to Jian Chen. In just three short days, Jian Chen had completely monopolized the entire power of the city.

“Wah, brother, you’re so strong! Each one of those people were joined the Flame Mercenaries without question! If this was Fengyang City, not a single one of those groups would be as strong as the top three clans!” Bi Lian spoke excitedly. Everything that happened today had been something that she couldn’t even possibly imagine even in her dreams.

Jian Chen had a kind smile on his face when he saw the excitement that was on Bi Lian’s face. The fact that she had called him brother had given Jian Chen a rather warm sensation. Aside from his duty to protect Bi Lian from harm, Jian Chen now felt that he had a duty as an older brother to make her happy.

“Bi Lian, since you haven’t condensed your Saint Weapon, you must make sure you keep hard at cultivating. As long as you are strong, you will be able to do what you set your mind to. If you need some monster cores to cultivate, then feel free to ask me for them.” Jian Chen spoke.

A sour look had immediately spread over her face, “Brother, it’s not as if I’m not trying hard enough. It’s because my talent at it isn’t like yours. No matter how much I try to cultivate, my speed is exceedingly slow. I’m eighteen years old and I’m barely at the sixth layer of Saint Force. There’s still a very long time until the tenth layer I’m afraid.” But then a sweet smile appeared on her face afterwards as she laughed, “But that’s not important. As long as I have a brother like you to protect me, no one will dare bully me.”

## Chapter 586: Alarming The King

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Forcing out a smile, Jian Chen spoke, “Bi Lian, you are thinking a little too simplistically. I am nowhere as invincible as you think I am. In truth, there is a heavy weight on my shoulders.”

With blinking eyes, Bi Lian stared curiously at Jian Chen, “Brother, just what weight is there on your shoulders?”

A sigh had escaped from Jian Chen’s lips; he did not wished to discuss this problem and had thus decided to change the topic. “Bi Lian, although your aptitude for cultivation is lackluster, there are plenty of heavenly resources that could change that. Wait until we come across one, I will buy one for you and see that you will find a renewed chance at cultivation.”

“A heavenly resource that can do such a thing would have to be extremely ancient in age. Those are far and few on the continent, and each one of them worth a city’s weight in gold almost. Only a very robust and flourishing kingdom would have these heavenly resources in stock; a kingdom like the Gesun or Blue Wind Kingdom would never have the chance for one. In other words, to come across one would be very rare.” The usually very quiet Dugu Feng spoke.

“Wait until we have the chance to explore. I’ll do my best to go and find if there are any heavenly resources that fit the description.” Jian Chen laughed. As of right now, the amount of gold Jian Chen had could rival a kingdom, the loss of money for the sake of a heavenly resource would not bother him at all.

And even Bi Lian had felt a mellow warmth in her heart and a smile on her face when she saw the care and concern Jian Chen had for her.

With that said and done with, Jian Chen turned his attention to Tie Ta who was currently seated on top of his magical beast mount in stone cold silence.

Having known Tie Ta's personality and what his expression meant, Jian Chen could tell that it would still take some time before Tie Ta would finally adjust to survival on the continent.

"Tie Ta, all that you've personally seen so far are just par for the course on the Tian Yuan Continent. A continent where the strong eat the weak and where only the strong have the right to speak. To survive, you must be strong, and without power, there is no point in any discussion." Jian Chen spoke.

A forlorn expression was on Tie Ta's face when he looked up to Jian Chen, "Jian Chen, this world is far too cruel. I feel as if this is a land where bandits roam."

"That is an apt analogy; the world has always been like this. Without power, you will only be bullied by another. With power, everyone will fear you and would dare not anger you. What just happened in the courtyards of the Griff clan is only proof of that." Jian Chen laughed.

"Haha, big fellow, you're already such a big person with a mean looking face yourself. But your heart is pure--what a twist." Ming

Dong laughed.

Tie Ta's face had reddened when Ming Dong had addressed him, but instead of saying anything back to him, Tie Ta had instead chosen to remain quiet.

Jian Chen's eyes had looked to You Yue by his side. She wore a white robe that accentuated the refined grace she had. It had been no wonder that as a princess, she was said to be beautiful even to bring a kingdom to its knees.

There had been a twinge of guilt in his eyes however. She was his fiancée, but he had no idea how he should treat her now. In his mind, he had no idea how to treat Huang Luan either. She loved him and his parents had betrothed him to You Yue, but hadn't personally thought anything about it. Even now, he still didn't even know how to approach the question.

Now that he had experienced life on the Tian Yuan Continent himself, Jian Chen had come out from this experience with plenty of enemies. Some of these enemies were Saint Rulers in isolation, and this had been the instrumental source of stress--a weight so heavy on his shoulders that it may as well be a mountain. For the sake of improving his own strength, Jian Chen had to throw away any superfluous thoughts on settling down.

All were ants in the eyes of Saint Rulers. This was something Jian Che knew, and he also knew that unless he had the strength of a Saint Ruler, he would never be able to hold his footing within the continent.

But how could becoming a Saint Ruler be that easy? Even though he had managed to absorb fragments of the mysteries of the world during his stay in the holy lands, Jian Chen still had a long way to go before he could even come into contact with that realm.

You Yue's face had gone slightly red when she noticed Jian Chen's attentive stare at her. Gingerly shifting over to him like a bashful deer would tip-toe over to the bush, she whispered to him, "Jian Chen, was there something you wanted/"

As if shaken awake, Jian Chen gave her a glittering smile, "You Yue, this is the first time you traveled the continent as well; are you accustomed to how the life of a wanderer is now?"

Smiling sweetly, You Yue replied, "I am rather fond of this lifestyle. Everyday is another day where I get to experience and see something new in the world. There's just so much to this world unlike what there is to be seen in the palace. Every day was spent in boredom and the same scenery, and leaving the palace was very troublesome."

"In the past, I was able to see what the world might have looked through the books in Kargath Academy. It was these books that made me yearn to travel the continent, and now I can finally see the sights for myself." You Yue smiled in bliss.

"The world may be magnificent, but there are just as many dangers as there are sights. Every place of the world has plenty of risks and dangers that could end up as a fight to the death. Every

day is a day that a person will die--a peaceful life is not something that anyone could experience.”

With some slight bitterness to her face, You Yue responded to him, “Jian Chen, your strength is far more than enough to step across the continent as you please. Just what weight is it on your shoulders that you cannot put down to enjoy life a little bit?”

“Ai!” Jian Chen sighed. “The weight on my shoulder is something I cannot put down. There are still matters that I must resolve.”

“Just what sort of matters, will you tell us?” You Yue asked curiously.

Jian Chen shook his head, “It isn’t that I don’t wish to tell you, it’s just that there is no benefit in you knowing the answer. Let us stop the chat for now and discuss what plans you might have for the Flame Mercenaries, shall we?”

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And so the group began to discuss the matters of the Flame Mercenaries as they traveled on the road back to their inn. Although they had now monopolized every single powerful faction within the Cloud Capital, they were still staying within the inn from before.

At the same time they had entered the inn, every single leader

that had just joined the Flame Mercenaries had made it home as well. The very first thing they had done was to have someone tear down their signboards and replace it with the name of the Flame Mercenaries.

Jian Chen's actions had flown at incredible speeds around the Cloud Capital. Soon enough, practically everyone had heard and learned about how the equilibrium of power had been completely and thoroughly shattered. In the past, there had been many factions vying against each other, but now, there was only a single faction left. In the three whole days that the Flame Mercenaries had been in the city, they had managed to overcome everyone's expectations and so the entire city had been set abuzz with this as their topic of conversation.

When the lord of the Cloud Capital himself had heard what had transpired, his entire person went as stiff as a board. He simply couldn't believe what he had heard--the ten or something factions that had once been separate were now united. With their powers united, they were now stronger than not only the city lord, but most of the factions in the Blue Wind Kingdom--a fact that was completely shocking to think about.

A very serious problem had popped up in front of the lord now. His power as the lord of the city was practically for show now, and if the Flame Mercenaries were to try and do something in the city, there would be no way for him to do anything but to stand and watch by the sidelines.

“Just what sort of god is the captain of the Flame Mercenaries? If he is able to unite so many factions together under his banner, just



what is he made of?” The lord had spoken with narrowed eyes. The robustness of the Flame Mercenaries had caused the man no small amount of discomfort.

“The Flame Mercenaries has already evolved to a point where even I cannot do a thing about them. All that’s left for me to do is to report this to the king himself.” The lord muttered before hastily writing a letter to send off to the imperial palace with the utmost haste.

Nearly half a day later at the imperial palace of the Blue Wind Kingdom, the king had been sitting in his study room when he received the letter. Reading it, his face grew more and more solemn, and the further he read, the more his eyebrows furrowed together.

A long while later, the king had finally put down the letter with a questioning mutter, “Flame Mercenaries? Just where in the world did they come from? I’ve never heard of such a name and yet they have already subjugated several factions that had an Earth Saint Master in their ranks. That is practically unbelievable.”

The fact that the Flame Mercenaries had managed to accomplish so much by uniting several dozen factions together into one faction had been an extremely important issue that made the king very worried.

Then as if the king had thought of something, his eyes begun to sparkle, “Perhaps there is a Heaven Saint Master within the Flame Mercenaries. Only a Heaven Saint Master would be able to accomplish a feat like subjugating several factions at once.”

Having reached this conclusion, the king's face grew inexplicably solemn. "Men! Call for master Ku Yun into my study at once."

Soon enough, an elder with gray robes came striding into the room. This elder was in his sixties and had bright eyes that sparkled brilliantly.

"Your majesty, what matter have you called me here today?" The elder smiled, but he did not bow to him.

Holding out the letter to the man, the king spoke, "Master Ku Yun, please take a look yourself."

Waving his hand, the man floated the letter from the king's hand and into his own hand before starting to read it.

Soon enough, the elder's eyes begun to show signs of surprise, "What a mercenary team this Flame Mercenaries is. In three days, they managed to unite over a dozen factions? But with a strength like that, why have I never heard of the Flame Mercenaries before?"

"I am quite vexed by this situation. These Flame Mercenaries are most likely a foreign power that immediately sought out to subjugate an entire First Class City in one go. Their scheme is very apparent to see. If we let them alone in our kingdom to grow, then they will become the bane of our existence sooner or later." The king spoke seriously.

# Chapter 587: The Advent Of A Powerful Enemy

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“Your Majesty, are you saying to get rid of this group?” The elder inquired.

A hum escaped from the king’s mouth, “I wouldn’t say get rid of. The fact that another strong individual has appeared within the Blue Wind Kingdom is a boon to us as a whole. But I fear if he is an outsider and has come into our kingdom to expand his influence before taking those men and leaving the kingdom. Should that happen, the damages to our kingdom would be huge. We have only just finished a war with the Gesun Kingdom, our weakened kingdom definitely cannot sustain another crippling.”

“Then what does your Majesty believe needs to be done?”

“Master Ke Yun, I’ll be troubling you this time. I hope that you will be able investigate the Flame Mercenaries yourself and see what their goals are. If they wish to stay within the kingdom as they try to grow, then I will of course welcome them. But if they wish to steal away people or anything else that could affect our kingdom negatively, then we must strike them down at once without mercy.” The king spoke.

“Understood, I know what needs to be done.” The elder nodded before turning around to leave.

“One moment, master Ke Yun.” The king called out to the elder. “Master Ke Yun, your king is worried that there will be a Heaven

Saint Master within the mercenary group. So before you leave for the Cloud Capital, take some people with you.”

“Thank you for your concern, your Majesty!” A brief smile and bow was given to the king before Ke Yun continued on his way out from the study with his held high.

As soon as the king saw Ke Yun leave the room, a wave of concern washed over him. “Why do I feel so much unease, is it because of this Flame Mercenaries? Will it be this newly made mercenary group that will be a scourge onto my Blue Wind Kingdom?”

He had remained seated where he was with a grim expression, “After the battle of the Gesun Kingdom, the kingdom has lost four of eight Heaven Saint Masters; and even the remaining four are all heavily injured. I hope that this feeling of unease is just a feeling.”

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Within the Cloud Capital, discussion had run rampant throughout the next two days. Whether it was the main streets, hidden alleyways, or the restaurants and inns, everyone could be heard talking about the Flame Mercenaries.

The Flame Mercenaries had appeared in the Cloud Capital as if out of thin air. Then with unbelievable speed, they had combined the powers of the first-rate factions into an even bigger entity. News like this would definitely cause a major buzz within the city.

Consequently, this had caused the second and third-rate factions to feel slightly nervous. For the entire day, they had been extremely nervous to the point of having some clans electing to temporarily leaving the city and hide away until the crisis was gone. They were afraid that the hands of the Flame Mercenaries would stretch towards even them. Many--if not all--of the factions did not want to lose the power they had worked for to become a lackey for another.

Of course, not every of these factions had been like that. Some of them had even took the initiative to look for the Flame Mercenaries in hopes of joining it.

When the dozen major clans that had initially joined were given the command from Jian Chen, they began to accept all of the newcomers into the mercenary group without declining a single one.

Right now, the Flame Mercenaries needed new blood to join the Flame Mercenaries. When it came to management, Jian Chen wasn't concerned. The dozen clans had enough power to lay down the law on their own and could easily manage their own mercenaries too.

From the other side, the lord of the city had not been as happy to see more and more people join the Flame Mercenaries. The more people that joined in fact, the more nervous he became. Nothing could be done on his part to ebb this chaotic maelstrom that was happening within his city aside from standing in silence on the sidelines and hope that someone from the kingdom would come in to interfere.

“It is fortunate that the Feral Mercenaries are all out on a mission, otherwise they might have been annexed into this mess too.” The lord muttered.

In the blink of an eye, the maelstrom had only gotten bigger. Four days had passed now, and the Flame Mercenaries had continued to swallow up even more factions into their folds. News of what had transpired in the city had even made its way across the entire Blue Wind Kingdom. No matter if it was a big or small city, each and every one of them had heard about it.

Whether people believed it or not, the news that they received had sparked a paradigm shift in the Blue Wind Kingdom--the rise of a new powerful faction had come.

A long ways away from the Cloud Capital was the First Class Tianlong City. Within the biggest mansion in the city stood a middle-aged man. Cloaked in white robes, this man stared out at the pond in front of him with both hands behind his back.

This! This was the lord of Tianlong City!

Almost absentmindedly, the lord began to mutter to himself, “Ah, how unexpected! A truly unexpected event it is. The originally weak and piddling mercenary group back in Wake City has suddenly transformed to be strong enough to subjugate the entire Cloud Capital in several days. A change like that is utterly inconceivable.”

Inside another room in the same mansion sat Katata and Katafei. Seated at a table, the two of them were discussing with one another over a bottle of wine.

Having drained his cup, Katata spoke to the other, “Katafei, you ought to know what happened back in the Cloud Capital too. Do you think that the Flame Mercenaries there are the very same ones from Wake City?”

“I do!” Katafei spoke. As the stoic one of the two, he cherished his words as if they were gold and did not dispense them easily.

“How are you so sure?” Katata pressed on.

“Jian Chen’s strength is an unknown to us, but to have a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master at his beck and call? It is him.” Katafei spoke. There had been suspicion and confusion to be in his mind, but his face betrayed none of those emotions.

Draining the rest of his cup in one single gulp, Katata sighed. “It really is hard to believe that Jian Chen has accomplished so much in just two years. Two years ago he was said to have joined the Gathering of the Mercenaries, did he receive some sort of boon while he was there? It’s a tremendous pity that Mercenary City is nearly worlds apart from our kingdom, only the most important news would make it way here.”

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Jian Chen was at this moment sitting on top of his bed within the inn of the Cloud Capital. As he was trying to cultivate, Xiao Bai continued to roll around on the covers of the bed for amusement. It had been fortunate that the cover was a very simple and inexpensive one, for it had already been torn to shreds by the claws of the tiger cub.

Jian Chen had not left the inn for several days and spent his time cultivating in his room to wait for everyone else to fully recover and finish what was left before embarking on their trip out from the Cloud Capital.

“Captain of the Flame Mercenaries, make your way to see us at once.” Suddenly, a voice like thunder had boomed through the skies. The speaker’s voice had been so strong that it seemed to shake the world itself. The streets shook and the buildings quivered--even the clouds had been blown away to reveal the sun behind it--everyone had heard the voice to what very well might belong to a god.

For a moment, the entire Cloud Capital was quiet before suddenly erupting into a cacophony of sound. Everyone had turned their heads to the skies as if trying to find the origins of the voice.

“I see them, look! Over there! Two men in the skies! Those are Heaven Saint Masters!” Suddenly, an excited middle-aged man pointed erratically at a point in the sky with a loud cry.

The heads of everyone in the city turned to look where the man was pointed at--and indeed--there were what appeared to be two tiny ant-like dots up in the sky. While small in figure, the might



that exuded from them made them look more like gods descending upon the mortal world.

“Those are two Heaven Saint Masters! They have to be here to fight the Flame Mercenaries, it’s all over for them now.”

“What a calamity for the Flame Mercenaries. With two Heaven Saint Masters here, they’re ruined for sure.”

Everyone had been furiously discussing this topic with some hidden glee. But those who had joined the Flame Mercenaries already had gone pale in the face.

The lord of the city came scrambling out from his mansion to stare out into the skies at the two Heaven Saint Masters. “Two Heaven Saint Masters? His Majesty has sent two over them over? Great! This is fantastic! The Flame Mercenaries are definitely ruined now!”

From every part of the Cloud Capital, several dozen factions that had aligned with the Flame Mercenaries came filing out. When they saw the two Heaven Saint Masters floating high in the sky, their faces had gone pale. Those who had been forced into joining had a happy look on their faces, but those who had willingly joined had felt a fearful look spread on their faces.

A single Heaven Saint Master was already enough to worry them. But two Heaven Saint Masters was a tremendous amount of pressure on them.

From within his own room, Jian Chen slowly opened his eyes to look up.

At the same time, the doors to his room opened to reveal Ming Dong and the others.

“Jian Chen, two Heaven Saint Masters are here--how rambunctious they are to strut here and there on the skies--do they think no one knows who they are? Hah, if they’re willing to try it, I’ll beat them black and blue until they run away.” Ming Dong laughed. In his eyes, a Heaven Saint Master wasn’t some sort of unreachable entity he could not chase up to.

“Captain of the Flame Mercenaries, come on out at once.” Don’t think that hiding away in the city like a tortoise will help you.” This time, another voice had exploded out from the skies with a reverberating echo.

The loud voice had angered Ming Dong, “Who the fuck is that to be so aggressive-sounding?”

A cold smile appeared on Jian Chen’s own face. “Stay here, I’ll go out to greet them myself!” As soon as he spoke, a single hole had suddenly appeared on the top of the roof, revealing the bright azure skies beyond it. Not even a second later, Jian Chen had already disappeared from his bed into the skies.

# Chapter 588: A Battle That Entrances The Entire City

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Above the skies of the Cloud Capital, the two Heaven Saint Masters from the Blue Wind Kingdom towered over the ground like two gods watching over the mortal realm.

And on the streets below, countless of bystanders craned their necks to look up. For these two Heaven Saint Masters, everyone could only look at them with expressions of admiration and uncontained worship.

The realms of Heaven Saint Masters was a realm that mercenaries could only look at in yearning. Talks of reaching this realm was merely just talk. Out of the millions of people in the Blue Wind Kingdom, not even ten of them were Heaven Saint Masters.

Suddenly, an azure streak of light zipped into the skies. In the blink of an eye, the light had already risen five hundred meters to near the two Heaven Saint Masters. The speed of this light had been so fast that the bystanders on the streets hadn't even seen it clearly or where it had even come from.

“Everyone, look! Another Heaven Saint Master has appeared, do you think he's the captain of the Flame Mercenaries?”

“He has to be. But I didn't think that there'd be another Heaven Saint Master here.”

“What speed that captain has! I didn’t even see where it was coming from, he has to be a very powerful one!”

“Hmph, this time there’s two Heaven Saint Masters from our kingdom to greet him. No matter how strong this captain is, there’s no way he’ll be a match for two Heaven Saint Masters.”

Right now, the eyes of everyone in the city had been glued to the sight in the skies. No matter what it was they were doing, everyone could only stare at this splendid sight for them and discuss to one another furiously. No matter where one went in the city, the streets were jam-packed with people that stood transfixed.

Inside his mansion still, the lord of the Cloud Capital concentrated his eyes onto the third Heaven Saint Master. “So, the Flame Mercenaries had a Heaven Saint Master as a captain!” He muttered.

The leaders of every single faction within the city had stood entranced at the sight as well. Staring at the three ant-like objects in the sky, each and every single one of them had found a sudden desire to see what type of battle the three Heaven Saint Masters would perform for them.

Up in the skies above, Jian Chen and the two Heaven Saint Masters stood twenty meters apart from one another.

“I am the captain of the Flame Mercenaries. Was there something you wished to know?” Jian Chen sneered with narrowed eyes.

Rooted to where they were in the skies, the two Heaven Saint Masters from the Blue Wind Kingdom could only stare with rigid wide eyes at the dreadfully familiar face of Jian Chen. Already had their faces gone slightly awry--between the two sides was already a pre-existing grudge.

“The captain of the Flame Mercenaries was you?” One of the Heaven Saint Masters spoke, the expression he had before had disappeared without a trace.

Jian Chen laughed coldly, “Correct. It is this one. Since you were so adamant on calling me out, was there something you wished to tell me?” The eyes on Jian Chen’s face suddenly gained a spark of killing intent in them.

Sensing the killing intent from Jian Chen’s eyes, the two Heaven Saint Master felt their hearts tense up in vigilance. They had first seen each other in the battle with the Gesun Kingdom, and it was there that they saw this youngster kill the Heaven Saint Masters from the Qiangnan and the Blue Wind Kingdom himself. In the end, only four out of the eight Heaven Saint Masters from the Blue Wind Kingdom had escaped with their lives.

Despite the tender age of this youth, these two heaven Saint Masters knew better than to belittle him for his age. There was absolutely no way possible that they could win against this man.

“This is an unfavorable situation, we’re leaving!” The two heaven Saint Masters had immediately resolved to leave the area

when they sensed the killing intent from Jian Chen grew heavier and heavier. It went without a doubt that should they stay here, the skies above the Blue Wind Kingdom would become a battlefield sooner or later. And under no circumstances did either of the two wish to partake in a battle with a man who could kill Heaven Saint Master after Heaven Saint Master consecutively.

“Leaving? What makes you think that you can do that so easily?” Jian Chen laughed; he had no plans on allowing these two to leave so easily. Clenching both of his palms, two swords made of fire suddenly materialized out of thin air and shot towards the two escapees.

Detecting the abnormality behind them, the two Heaven Saint Masters thought to themselves, “It seems that a battle is unavoidable.”

The two of them had reacted quickly to the attack and so with a thought, a wave of earth and water suddenly gathered in their hands. Within a mere second, a dragon made of earth and water had formed between the two men.

Seeing that the two men were seemingly competing with him in a battle of elements, Jian Chen let loose a sneer on his face. “Fire is the strongest of the six elements in strength; even the light and dark elements would be unable to compare. If you wish to fight me with the elements, you will surely be the ones to eat the loss.”

The Heaven Saint Master controlling the earth dragon had not said a word and instead pushed out his hands. With that action, the earth dragon flew out with a roar to charge towards Jian Chen.

“Fire is indeed the strongest element of the six, but my water will put out your fire nonetheless!” The other Heaven Saint Master barked out. The aquatic dragon let out a roar of its own before flying towards the blades of fire to devour it.

“Bang!”

The earthen dragon made contact with one of the flame swords with an explosive bang. In an instant, the dragon had been reduced to dust before fading away in the skies while the sword had continued onwards albeit being smaller than before. Before the impact, the sword had been five meters long, and now, it had been reduced to a single meter.

Another explosion rang out through the skies shortly afterwards as the second flame sword collided with the water dragon. In a brilliant display, the water dragon exploded apart to turn into a spherical ball of water to try and drown out the flame sword within it.

“Ssssshhhh.....”

Water and fire were in nature contrasting elements. So when the two elements intertwined with one another, a sizzling sound could be heard while vapor rose up from the sphere to cover the visibility of the three combatants with the smoke. From either side of the battlefield, neither person could see the other.

The Cloud Capital had been a cacophony of sounds that erupted

this way and throughout the city. But now, the city had transformed into a ghost city without a single bit of life to be seen. Not a single person had said a word as they watched the spectacle above them. Even the rooftops of the buildings had people standing on top of it, but not a single of them had dared let out a breath of air as they watched the battle.

Ming Dong, Dugu Feng and the others stood on top of the roof of the inn to look up at the battle. Not a single one of them had looked worried for Jian Chen however, they did not need to worry about any danger that might befall Jian Chen as they were all confident in his strength. Two Heaven Saint Masters weren't nearly enough to harm him, and even if that number were to be multiplied, Jian Chen would not be harmed still.

Only Bi Lian had been nervous about Jian Chen since she did not know his full strength. She knew that her older cousin was a Heaven Saint Master as well, but the fact that he was going up against two other Heaven Saint Masters worried her greatly about Jian Chen's life.

Just like Bi Lian, Tie Ta had worried for Jian Chen too.

“Bang!”

A muffled explosion rippled through the airs once more as the Saint Weapon of the controller of the earth dragon smashed against the flame sword. This time, the sword had disappeared into wisps of fire before disappearing from the world itself/



At the same time, the battle between fire and water had ended as well. The steam from the struggle had grown fainter and fainter, but no sizzling sounds could be heard anymore. Finally, the three Heaven Saint Masters could see that the water dragon had disappeared without even a drop of water to be seen while the flame sword had decreased by half its size.

“What a flame!” The Heaven Saint Master had cried out. But even before he could finish his speech, the flame sword had shot straight at him with a velocity that was even faster than before.

Not daring to taking any careless risks anymore, the Heaven Saint Master took his Saint Weapon out and smashed apart the flame sword with narrowed eyes. “If sire wishes to be as aggressive as you are, then do not blame us two for being impolite! Ku Yun, let us use our battle skills together!”

Nodding grimly, Ku Yun knew that the battle today was undoubtedly a battle where they had to fight to the best of their abilities in order to survive.

And now that the two of them were on the same page, neither of the two hesitated to begin to use their battle skills. As Heaven Saint Masters, using an Earth Tier Battle Skill could be done with ease and did not need any additional time to charge up the power for it.

“Earth Tier Battle Skill--Hammer of the Earth God!”

“Earth Tier Battle Skill--Dimensional Sword Qi!”

As the two of them finished casting their battle skills, a tremendous sledgehammer ten meters long made completely from the earth element formed above Ku Yun. With a single movement of his hands, the hammer slammed downwards onto Jian Chen. By his side, the other man had exuded a tremendous fog of Sword Qi that shot forth the envelope Jian Chen within it.

From Jian Chen's eyes did two bright lights of azure and violet form. As they gleamed and twinkled, the two lights seemed as if they were two dancing will-o'-the-wisps made from the powers of a different world.

Suddenly, all sorts of stones, bricks, tiles, and even steel had begun to levitate up into the skies. From each object that flew up, a faint glow of azure and violet could be seen radiating from it.

At the same time, the Origin energy of the azure and violet sword spirits had formed into a single sword. Wielding it in his right hand, Jian Chen had seemingly transformed into a whole different person. With a sword in his hand, the aura around him had turned as sharp as his weapon.

Following a flash of azure and violet, a series of mirror images followed Jian Chen's figure as he streaked through the skies. Wielding the Origin energy, Jian Chen waved his sword and immediately sliced through the giant hammer as if it were made of tofu rather than earth. And so in a single stroke, the hammer had been split in two.

With the hammer destroyed, Ku Yun's battle skill had been broken up as well meaning that the earth element that had been materialized for it had disappeared back into the world.

“N-no! That's not possible!” Ku Yun cried out in fright and dismay--how had his Earth Tier Battle Skill be so easily defeated like this? But Jian Chen had continued to wield his Origin energy sword with blinding speed towards the man without pause. With an explosive power that was no less inferior to his Saint Force in the past, the azure and violet Origin energy had stabbed itself deeply into Ku Yun's chest and then out from it.

# Chapter 589: Unrestrained Expansion

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A short winded cough came from Ku Yun's mouth as the blood drained from his face.

The other man paled considerably when he saw Jian Chen pierce straight through Ku Yun's chest. With a loud shout, a large amount of his Sword Qi began to fly out to strike down the countless pieces of rubble flying at them. Then, with his Saint Weapon hoisted overhead, the man flew to attack Jian Chen to save Ku Yun.

Jian Chen turned to look at the man with a cold smile appearing on his lips, "Was it you that told me to come on out? Don't even think about leaving here today alive." Jian Chen pulled out the Origin energy sword from Ku Yun's chest and shot toward the second man like a bolt of lightning.

"Clink!" Upon contact with the azure and violet beam of light, the Saint Weapon of the other Heaven Saint Master let out a cracking sound. A piece of it broke off. Against the azure and violet Sword Spirits, the Saint Weapon of a Heaven Saint Master may as well be as strong as a roof tile.

"Pfft!" With his Saint Weapon damaged, the elder was seriously injured and spat out a mouthful of blood as well.

Jian Chen's hand did not slow down after the first blow. He swiftly moved his wrist to deliver his second slash with a speed like lightning. Under the powerful muscles of his arm, the sword

traveled so fast that only the reflection of the blade was seen. Before the other man could even understand what was happening, the Origin energy had stabbed into his forehead. It pierced out the back of his head, extinguishing his soul and killing him completely.

“Ba La!” Ku Yun howled in grief and sorrow when he saw his friend pierced through the head. He knew that the Blue Wind Kingdom had lost yet another Heaven Saint Master.

With the Origin energy stabbing straight into Ba La’s head, his spirit was utterly vanquished. The light in his eyes vacated and his body started to drop back down to the ground.

With hands as quick as his eyes, Jian Chen palmed Ba La’s Space Ring before turning back to speak to the anguished Ku Yun. “I was planning to kill you, but I think I’ll spare your life. Go back to your king and tell him that it’d be in his best interest to not interfere with the matters of the Flame Mercenaries. If he refuses to listen, then do not blame me for what happens next.” Even as he spoke, the Origin energy formed by the azure and violet sword spirits faded from sight.

The muscles in Ku Yun’s face twitched irregularly as he stared down this youth in front of him with a mixture of fear and shock. Even his voice quavered when he delivered his next line, “The war between the Gesun Kingdom and the Blue Wind Kingdom is finished, and we’ve doled out hefty compensation already. There is neither grievances nor hatred between you and Ba La. What reason did you kill him for?”

“A loose tongue causes plenty of troubles. You should remember in the future that less is more. Leave now, and don’t forget to tell your esteemed king what I’ve told you.” Laughing, Jian Chen turned to descend from the sky back to the inn.

Still in mute shock, Ku Yun remained floating in the air, desolately looking at the dead corpse of Ba La. Down in the streets, his corpse had not moved at all other than from the still-spreading pool of blood. A crowd of people had formed around the corpse, and not a single one of them could believe what they saw.

Dropping down from the sky, Ku Yun took Ba La’s corpse with him and immediately left the Cloud Capital.

When they arrived in the Cloud Capital, the two of them had made an aggressive entrance. In the end, only one of those men left the city alive.

With the battle between Heaven Saint Masters finally finished, the entire city was left as still as a ghost town. Mercenaries and merchants alike stared at the sky in mute shock and disbelief even though not a single Heaven Saint Master remained.

A dozen figures were already running to the spot where Ba La had landed with as much speed as they could muster. Just barely stopping around the bloodstained spot, each one of them revealed a sluggish expression on their faces.

Included in this group was the lord of the Cloud Capital and several of the other leaders of the strongest factions. What was

unknown, however, was what was running through their minds at that moment.

Jian Chen had already returned to the inn and onto the bed he had been sitting on before. The only difference this time was that a hole could be seen in the ceiling above him.

Ming Dong and the others were already back in the room, so when Jian Chen descended, Bi Lian came flying past the doors to greet Jian Chen excitedly, “Wow! Brother, you’re amazing! Even the two Heaven Saint Masters of the kingdom were beaten by you.” Bi Lian spoke. She looked up to Jian Chen with great big eyes of adoration. A single person being able to defeat two Heaven Saint Masters working in tandem without a single scratch was essentially an undefeatable entity to her. She was exuberant in her worship for Jian Chen since he had been able to prevail against two Heaven Saint Masters by himself without being hurt at all. A feat like this was practically on the same level of an unbeatable being.

Something like this was more than enough to make her realize in this moment that her older cousin was a far stronger person than she had initially thought.

“Wrong, he killed one and injured one. If Jian Chen didn’t let that second one live, then neither of the two would have left this place alive!” Ming Dong corrected her.

Bi Lian was even more elated to hear what Ming Dong said. She rated Jian Chen higher on the pedestal now.

Even You Yue by Jian Chen's side revealed a slight tint of infatuation in her eyes. However, she looked up at the hole in the ceiling above Jian Chen and softly said, "Jian Chen, perhaps we should change rooms since you put a hole in the ceiling."

Jian Chen looked up at the hole he had created with an embarrassed smile, "Yes, perhaps I should change rooms."

Looking back at the ruined ceiling, Jian Chen gave an embarrassed smile, "Perhaps we should."

Not a single person within this room had bothered to pay attention to what was happening outside of the room. Thus, they were unaware of the pandemonium that was happening right now. The hottest topic in the city was about the fact that the captain of the Flame Mercenaries had successfully beat back two Heaven Saint Masters sent from the kingdom all by himself, and the fact that he had managed to kill one of them while injuring the other was something that everyone clearly witnessed. With that said, practically everyone within the city was in an uproar.

Having witnessed this sight, news of what transpired in the sky above the city spread throughout the entire kingdom with great speed. Within practically half a day, every nook and cranny of the kingdom would know about this ground-breaking news. The leaders that stood on top of the Blue Wind Kingdom would take this news seriously and would later send out their strongest to verify the truth of the rumors.



With everything said and done, the the Flame Mercenaries would cement their position within the Blue Wind Kingdom. The fact that the Flame Mercenaries had been able to subjugate an entire First Class city was enough to have the eyes of many on them, but the fact that this new situation had happened made everyone terrified at their strength.

Within the palace of the Blue Wind Kingdom, Ku Yun held the dead body of his companion Ba La within the halls where the king sat. Slowly, Ku Yun narrated what had happened to them both in the Cloud Capital while also describing Jian Chen to the king.

As soon as the entire story was recounted to him, the king sighed. In that sigh, he seemed as if to have aged years in a single moment.

For a while, the king was quiet before he finally spoke once more. “As we are powerless to stop them, it is pointless to even try anymore. Ai, our Blue Wind Kingdom had already grown weak because of the war. With this happening, our power is doomed to drop even further.”

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Several days later in the Cloud Capital, a long procession of people passed through the gates of the city. Every single banner that was flown around this group displayed the exact same emblem of a circular sphere of fire.

This group of people all belonged to the Flame Mercenaries.

The Flame Mercenaries of today were definitely on a whole different scale than before. In the past, it had been a single person, but now, it had expanded to over five thousand people, becoming the strongest group of mercenaries within the Blue Wind Kingdom. Their cumulative strength was more than enough to contend with any other faction in the kingdom.

Leading the group at the very front was Jian Chen, Ming Dong, Tie Ta, Dugu Feng, You Yue, and Bi Lian. Each one of the six were seated on top of their own magical beast mount, but this time, they were no longer riding a Class 3 Magical Beast. They were now seated on top of a Class 4 Magical Beast. All of their mounts had been graciously donated by the heads of the faction they had just recruited.

By now, every single person had accepted their newfound status in the group and were now earnestly working for the Flame Mercenaries as a whole. Having a powerhouse like Jian Chen as their support wasn't an easy thing to find, and by joining the Flame Mercenaries, they could earn the chance to win the Earth Tier Battle Skill they had always dreamed of. They could even get a Heaven Tier Battle Skill that even Heaven Saint Masters would drool over. These three factors combined were a tremendous temptation to them. Even if the heavens were to drop a meat pie in front of them, it would not be as alluring. If anyone were to tell them that a Heaven Saint Master was capable of absorbing life from them, they would not care.

All in all, they were not regretting their new way of life. Most felt delighted to greet this change and did not feel displeased at all.

“Captain, where will we go next from here?” Zhan Tian asked from the side.

“Tianlong City isn’t too far away, let’s go there.” Jian Chen replied.

In a short few days, the Flame Mercenaries had experienced a period of expansion with no restraint. Just like that, a First Class city had found itself annexed into the Flame Mercenaries, exponentially increasing their power.

After the entire matter with the Cloud Capital ended, the Flame Mercenaries possessed about three hundred thousand members and almost a hundred Earth Saint Masters, leaving the Blue Wind Kingdom practically desolate of its stronger population.

The Blue Wind Kingdom had no solution for the growth of the Flame Mercenaries. They had no one to stop them. They had no way to even try. All the king could do was sit within the halls of his palace with a miserable expression as he watched the Flame Mercenaries grow stronger and stronger while his kingdom grew weaker and weaker. By the time the strongest factions of the Blue Wind Kingdom had heard what Ku Yun had told the king, they were all absolutely convinced that the captain of the Flame Mercenaries could not be angered at any costs. For that reason, none of the factions came forward to stop the expansion of the Flame Mercenaries, and some of them had even prepared themselves to be annexed into the group as well.

# Chapter 590: A Friend Has Come

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In the blink of an eye, two months passed. During these two months, the Flame Mercenaries had exponentially expanded and earned a place as one of the strongest mercenary groups in the Blue Wind Kingdom. A group that stood on top of the other leading factions and even the royal palace itself.

Up to this point, only the strongest families and factions had been able to prevent themselves from being subjugated by Jian Chen.

A large mansion was situated at the very center of a First Class city called Wanzhu City. This mansion had originally belonged to the strongest power within that city, but had now been reclaimed to become the living area of the Flame Mercenaries for the time being. Even the nameboard at the very front had been swapped for the emblem of the Flame Mercenaries.

At this current moment within the magnificent halls of the mansion, Jian Chen and the strongest hundred members were all gathered around a table to discuss several important matters. For the moment, the rest of the mercenaries were all stationed outside the city in a clearing since they could not all enter the city at the same time.

“Captain, only three out of the six strongest families in the Blue Wind Kingdom were willing to join our Flame Mercenaries. The other three would rather die than submit.” Zhan Tian dutifully reported. He was one of the first to join the Flame Mercenaries and was also one of the three Earth Saint Masters from the Carnage

Mercenaries, and had been given the right to speak for the entire group.

From his seat at the very front of the table, Jian Chen revealed a small grin on his face as he took in the news from Zhan Tian. “Three of them were willing to submit I see. Not bad, I wasn’t expecting as much at first. Which three have agreed?”

Not long after he finished speaking, two middle-aged men and an elder come walking over with respectful salutes and greetings.

“This one is Shi Wanjun, representative for the Dayong clan. We of the Dayong clan would be happy to join the Flame Mercenaries and hope that we may follow the honorable captain into the brilliant light.”

“This one is An Situ, representative of the Domineering Heavens sect. We would be happy to join the Flame Mercenaries...”

“This one is Dick-Parosi, delegate of the Shuilan clan. We are willing to join your Flame Mercenaries...”

These three men were all Earth Saint Masters at about the Fourth or Fifth Cycle. The parties they represented were among the strongest powers in the Blue Wind Kingdom and once had a Heaven Saint Master presiding over them. However, those Heaven Saint Masters had been killed in the war with the Gesun Kingdom.

Staring at the three humble and respectful men, Jian Chen

nodded his head in satisfaction, “I welcome you into the family that is the Flame Mercenaries. From henceforth, we are all family. As long as you work with the Flame Mercenaries in mind, then I, Jian Chen, pledge to never treat any one of you wrong.”

“I declare that the Dayong clan, the Domineering Heavens sect, and the Shuilan clan, will change their names to that of the Halls of Dayong, Domineering Heaven, and Shuilan. And you three will still lead your respective hall.”

Jian Chen had no desire to expunge anyone of their power upon entry into the Flame Mercenaries. The only thing that would change would be their goals; their relative power would remain untouched, but any sect or clan would be changed to a ‘hall’.

“A thousand thanks for captain’s charity!” The three men clapped their hands together in salute. All three of them had been worried that their authority would be stripped away from them the moment they joined the Flame Mercenaries.

Sitting on his seat while deep thought, Jian Chen said, “Zhan Tian, take some people to Loess City and eliminate the Harido clan.”

“A report for the captain. Rumors have it that the Harido clan vacated Loess City a long time ago. According to our same sources, they’ve fled the Blue Wind Kingdom already.” A black-robed elder spoke.

“What? They’ve already left the kingdom?” Jian Chen’s eyes

narrowed for a moment before he waved his hand with a small smile. “They act quite fast. If I had known that they would flee earlier, I would have moved to deal with them sooner.”

“Captain, why don’t we dispatch a team to chase after them?” Zhan Tian asked.

Giving it a second to think about, Jian Chen replied, “No need. I will handle the Harido clan myself since they’re no longer a threat to worry about. Unless their leader is able to become a Heaven Saint Master, they won’t be able to do anything in the meanwhile. Even if he becomes a Heaven Saint Master in the next twenty years, our Flame Mercenaries will have grown strong enough to deal with them. Even if I’m not here, a single Heaven Saint Master won’t be able to measure up to the strength of the entire Flame Mercenaries. They’ve decided to run away from the kingdom for now, so we don’t even need to bother with them.”

“Then captain, what shall we do about the three factions that chose death over submission?” An elder asked from the side.

Jian Chen leaned back in his chair while his fingers kneaded. He realized that leading the Flame Mercenaries was becoming more and more of a headache. It was no longer as easy as before where he could act as he pleased. Back then he was the only member and didn’t require such heavy consideration.

“Everyone, why don’t you inform me of your ideas.” Jian Chen suggested.

“Captain, since the Flame Mercenaries have become so strong and those three factions refuse to submit, we shouldn’t let things lie there. We should eliminate them all. Let them serve as an example to the world of our strength.”

“Captain, we should avoid that at all costs. The remaining three factions still have two Heaven Saint Masters within their reach and a considerable amount of Earth Saint Masters. If those three join hands, then they will become an enemy that will deal a considerable amount of harm to us. Should we fight them, then we would anger even the kingdom itself. If they mobilize the entire army, then our Flame Mercenaries would suffer even more.”

“Captain, those three factions are not to be belittled. We have no conflict with them, and even if they would rather die than submit, it is not worth going to war with them only to suffer a disastrous result. The ends do not make up for the means.”

Everyone came to different conclusions about how to handle the situation. On one hand, some wanted to eliminate the group. On the other hand, some wanted to forgive and let them be.

From where she stood by the side, Bi Lian hesitated to speak for a brief second. Finally she gave her input, “Brother, there is no conflict between us and the three factions. We don’t have any real need to subjugate them, and we should forget about them for now since they’re willing to die rather than to submit. With two Heaven Saint Masters, they’d cause a lot of damage if they join together since our Flame Mercenaries have no other Heaven Saint Master besides you, brother.”



“Bi Lian and I share the same opinion.” You Yue agreed with her.

Everyone grew quiet when the two of them spoke. They all knew that these two women were both very close to the captain, and thus they were not willing to say anything else.

Jian Chen wasted no time to agree with the two of them, “If that is so, we’ll forget about this matter for now. Well, today’s meeting shall end here then. You may all leave and make the preparations for whatever necessities you need. In three days, we leave the Blue Wind Kingdom.”

“Yes, captain!” Everyone agreed before leaving the halls.

After the meeting was adjourned, Jian Chen returned to his own room. He lay down on the bed and closed his eyes. His fingers gently tapped against his temples. Now that the Flame Mercenaries had exploded in scale, it took even longer to consider and think everything through, causing Jian Chen some fatigue.

Suddenly, the doors opened to reveal You Yue wearing a pink long-skirt as she walked into the room. When she saw Jian Chen rubbing his temples, she revealed a concerned look on her face, “Jian Chen.” She softly continued, “Managing the Flame Mercenaries is a tiresome task, isn’t it?”

“Yes. It really is quite tiresome. Now that the Flame Mercenaries have grown, there is far too much to consider and far too many factors to think about. It is only now that I realize how tremendous a task it is to manage such an enormous group. Aside from having

an equally tremendous amount of power, one must not neglect being able to control and manage everything.” Jian Chen replied while massaging his headache.

Choosing to sit on a nearby chair, You Yue said, “You could delegate these small affairs to someone else you know.”

“There aren’t many that I could trust. Aside from the group we travel with, there are no other capable people. Ming Dong is the vice-captain, but I know his nature — he isn’t cut out for something like this. Dugu Feng does not have the power, and Tie Ta is further away from such a position. The only ones left would be you and Bi Lian.” Jian Chen sighed. Then his eyes flew open as he looked to You Yue, “You Yue, I know that you’ve been an intelligent person since childhood and spent years learning in Kargath Academy while growing up in the palace. If I have you and Bi Lian govern the Flame Mercenaries, do you believe that you would be able to do the group well?”

You Yue was pleasantly surprised to hear the words that had come out of Jian Chen’s mouth, “What? Jian Chen, do you really think Bi Lian and I should be governing the Flame Mercenaries?”

Sitting up, Jian Chen faced her with an earnest expression, “I do. If you have the ability to govern, then I would be willing to allow you to do so in my place.”

“That would be great, Jian Chen. You may rest assured. Bi Lian and I won’t let you down.” You Yue excitedly replied.

Just then, Ming Dong walked into the room. When he saw the happy You Yue by his side, Ming Dong stared suspiciously at Jian Chen, “Brother, you’ve a friend here to see you.”

“Who?” Jian Chen asked.

“You’ll know when you come.” Ming Dong smiled mischievously.

Suspicious of his actions, Jian Chen followed Ming Dong out of the room and into the open courtyards of the mansion with You Yue following him from behind.

Soon enough, Jian Chen arrived at the gates to the building, but when he saw just who this “familiar” person Ming Dong had referred to, the expression on his face solidified into one of astonishment.

The friend in question was Huang Luan.

# Chapter 591: Battle Of Two Women

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Stunned, Jian Chen stared at Huang Luan. She was standing by the gates and then his eyes swung to You Yue standing right next to him. He felt the complaints inside his head grow so huge that they would take off his head. Not once did he ever think that Huang Luan would take the initiative to find him, especially when his fiancée was right next to him.

One woman was someone he had some feelings for and once had a very close relationship with. The other woman was his fiancée that was known throughout the Gesun Kingdom. Jian Chen didn't even know just how to treat this matter since this was the first time these two women had come into contact.

Ming Dong clearly understood just what sort of trouble Jian Chen was in, but he had no intentions of helping him at all. Instead, he chuckled, "Brother, I have some things to take care of, so I'll be leaving first." Ming Dong hadn't really meant what he said. He turned around just a few steps away to observe Jian Chen, You Yue, and Huang Luan with a smile on his face as if he was taking pleasure in the crisis befalling Jian Chen.

Forcing a smile, Jian Chen asked Huang Luan, "What brings you here?"

Today, Huang Luan was wearing a white-colored robe that accentuated her picture-perfect figure that only the devil could offer. Her figure possessed an allure that could seize the hearts of anyone with just a single motion.

Her clothes were on point with how they had been tied. Not a single part of her robes was messed up. Compared to the clothing she had worn as the golden daughter of her clan, she looked like a heroic woman ready for travel.

The icy-cold demeanor on Huang Luan's face had instantly softened the moment her eyes fell upon Jian Chen. Smiling, she said, "Are you not going to welcome me in?" Her voice leaked a feeling of close friendship.

The forced smile was still on his face when Jian Chen addressed Huang Luan, "Of course I will welcome you in. Please, come in and we can have a chat."

Giving a sweet smile to Jian Chen, she tossed down the reins in her hand and followed him in.

The guards at the gates were members of the Flame Mercenaries, so they immediately rushed in to take the mount away.

Stopping in front of Jian Chen, she eyed his handsome face with a tender-hearted smile. She was just about to say something when, all of a sudden, she realized that there was another beautiful woman standing right next to Jian Chen. Eyeing her with some confusion, she asked, "Jian Chen, who's this?"

"Hello, I am You Yue!" You Yue answered first. There was a smile on her face, but in her heart, there was a sour feeling. The feelings Huang Luan had for Jian Chen were obvious to see. Hence, she was able to infer that the connection between the two was close.

“You Yue? Could you be the grand princess to the Gesun Kingdom?” Huang Luan asked her in shock.

She nodded in response, “Correct, that is I. Might I ask who you are?”

The light in Huang Luan’s eyes changed when she regarded You Yue now. There was a darker tint of light that seemed to contain some jealousy just barely hidden in them, “I am Huang Luan, a member of the Huang family.”

“Ah, miss Huang Luan, which kingdom are you from? I have heard of the Huang family before, but which clan it is, is something I know not.” You Yue smiled softly.

“I’m afraid to disappoint the princess, but my Huang family is affiliated with no kingdom. We live in the mountains and rarely encounter the surrounding kingdoms or any other family that might share our surname.” Huang Luan replied.

Sensing the hidden steel to their tones, Jian Chen felt his headache grow bigger and bigger. “Why don’t we walk inside first and continue our talks there?” He pressed.

Jian Chen, You Yue, and Huang Lan were all seated around a circular table in a splendid and magnificently decorated room. Huang Luan was excited to see Jian Chen, and talked to him nonstop about the Flame Mercenaries with great curiosity. Whenever she asked another question, Jian Chen answered

truthfully without leaving any mystery behind.

Huang Luan's eyes brightened at this moment as if she had remembered something. Looking to Jian Chen, she said, "Jian Chen, I've something to tell you. I've become the student to the patriarch of the Huanggu clan. They're even willing to teach me their Scriptures of the Aqua Sunflower, a Saint Tier Cultivation Method!"

"What? A Saint Tier Cultivation Method?" Jian Chen was astounded. Although cultivation methods weren't as wanted as a battle skill, a Saint Tier one was priceless despite that. Extremely rare and sparse, only the most isolated of hermits would have these cultivation methods.

"It is a cultivation method for those with the water affinity — something I coincidentally possess. Because of this, I learned it and cultivated the cultivation method for a small moment. In just two months, I was able to bring up my power so fast that I went from a First Cycle Earth Saint Master to a Second Cycle Earth Saint Master! It won't be long until I become a Third Cycle Earth Saint Master, and with this rate of progress, becoming a Heaven Saint Master won't even take too many years." Huang Luan's face was filled with unrestrained excitement.

You Yue felt shock grip her heart right by Jian Chen's side. She had not thought that this wildly-dressed Huang Luan would be an Earth Saint Master despite the close similarity in age to her own. Not only that, she too did not expect to hear that she was learning a Saint Tier Cultivation Method, something that was only mentioned in legends.

Not too long later, You Yue managed to restrain her emotions and maintain her calm demeanor. From what she heard, this Huang Luan was definitely someone high in status and was possibly one of those golden daughters belonging to a tremendous family. Not only was her talent at cultivation higher than her own, Huang Luan was already an Earth Saint Master at her age while You Yue wasn't. Lastly, Huang Luan had managed to find a teacher that imparted a Saint Tier Cultivation Method onto her. This meant that she was practically superior in every single aspect, and even with You Yue's status of a princess, she paled in comparison to Huang Luan.

Jian Chen noted the change in You Yue's demeanor with some concern. He immediately broke off the conversation, and called for someone to prepare Huang Luan and room. He then dismissed everyone.

Even after leaving the room, You Yue felt extremely depressed. Walking by herself to her own room, she sat on top of the bed and stared despondently at the wall across from her.

The doors to her room slowly opened to reveal Jian Chen gently making his way into the room. Jian Chen felt his heart clench when he saw how You Yue was faring.

Closing the doors behind him, Jian Chen walked over to You Yue and sat down beside her. Studying her face with great concern, Jian Chen was about to say something, but then he realized he had no idea just what words he could possibly use to comfort her.



He sighed. Jian Chen was not someone who understood how to speak with flowery speech, and in a situation like this, he was utterly powerless.

There was a gleam to her eyes when You Yue turned to look at Jian Chen with a miserable expression, but it was because of the reflection of the light on the layer of water that was welling up in her eyes. At last, two teardrops formed just enough to flow down her beautiful face before they splashed on the ground.

Jian Chen panicked at the sight of her teardrops, but before he could speak, You Yue beat him to the punch. “Jian Chen, tell me. Were your words before about you having no time for women a lie? You were unwilling to wed me before, was it because there was already another woman in your heart, a woman who is far superior than I am?”

She was heartbroken, and her voice was threatening to break into a sob. In all honesty, her heart felt nothing but love for Jian Chen, and that’s why she found it heartbreaking to be in such a situation. When Huang Luan showed up today, the deep feelings she felt for Jian Chen were completely obvious, visible even to the naked eye. Combined with the fact that she was superior in every way to You Yue, the princess felt this other woman’s presence as a tremendous threat that could steal away the man she loved.

Pulling at You Yue’s hands, Jian Chen clutched them with great intimacy as he softly said, “You Yue, it isn’t what you think it is. The reason why I wasn’t in a hurry to wed you was because I wasn’t ready to settle down. I have not yet resolved the problems that weigh on my shoulders, and if I don’t resolve them before I

start a family, then it will only bring everyone harm.”

“I won’t hear this! I don’t want to hear these lies; just how many times have you said these words?” You Yue began to cry.

At a loss for words, Jian Chen looked at You Yue. From the very start of their relationship, You Yue had given him the feeling of someone that was always calm, but this was the very first time he had ever seen You Yue cry her heart out. This was something he felt a great deal of pain over.

He sighed once more. He had to be honest with You Yue, else he would only hurt her more.

“You Yue, although it may seem as if I am invincible on the surface as a Heaven Saint Master and an Imperial Protector of one of the Eight Great Powers on the continent, my life is not as relaxed as you think it might be. I have many, many enemies that pose a threat to me still.” Jian Chen suddenly spoke before segueing into the hidden story of his life to her.

You Yue paused temporarily in her tears to fixate her eyes on him.

“In my years roaming the Tian Yuan Continent, I offended many families, and although some of them were killed off, there are still plenty of hidden factions that I have no way of fighting against. Among those families are the Shi family and the Jiede clan. These two factions are hermit clans on the continent with a vast amount of strength due to the fact that they have Saint Rulers ruling over

them. Only death would absolve the grudges between those factions and me. If I am alive, they will not rest, and if they are not dead, I will never be safe. It is likely that those two clans have been searching for me ever since, and even if there is a long distance between the two of us, it is only a matter of time before they arrive here. The very moment they find out my identity, being the Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom won't be nearly enough to help me. Thus, I must improve my strength as much as I can. If I do not, then when the Saint Rulers come for me, I will die a pauper's death along with the family I have."

Aside from those two, there is still the Sect of Dragon and Tiger from the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom. They are a powerful sect to contend with, and their patriarch is a Saint Ruler that heavily desires a treasure of mine. Me being an Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom has beaten them back temporarily, but they will not stop at that. It remains to be seen just what sort of tricks the Saint Ruler might come up with to harm me."

Staring solemnly at You Yue, he continued, "You Yue, do you understand the overwhelming pressure that weighs upon my shoulders now? The enemies I've made are people of the Saint Ruler realm. As I am now, I stand no chance against them. Even escape is an impossibility. With how the odds are stacked, I have no idea just how much time I have left to live."

# Chapter 592: Ancestor Of The Huanggu Clan

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In order to cure the wound in You Yue's heart, Jian Chen had no other choice but to explain everything he had hidden from the world — even his parents had never heard this information. Jian Chen knew that if he hiding his secrets like this would only serve to confirm the worries in You Yue's heart, dealing another blow to it. That was something Jian Chen wanted to avoid.

You Yue had completely stopped her tears as she listened to Jian Chen speak. The two glistening eyes on her beautiful face stared at Jian Chen in silence. She finally understood, this very moment, the tremendous amount of pressure Jian Chen had always talked about and just what great dangers were waiting ahead of him.

A Saint Ruler was an unfathomable entity in the eyes of You Yue. They were people that belonged to the legends of old. Only a few people on the continent were able to come face to face with them.

Jian Chen on the other hand, had managed to not only make enemies with a single Saint Ruler, but possibly two or even three of them! The fear You Yue felt in her heart was outweighed by the deep worries she had for Jian Chen.

He clenched his hands tightly over You Yue's. It was a first for him to really realize just how smooth and tender her jade-like palms felt to the touch. The sensation was very soft indeed, but Jian Chen didn't pay too much attention to the details. Instead he stared back at You Yue with a stern expression. "You Yue, I have not told even my parents of this, so I hope you will safeguard these secrets of mine. Do not let my mother know at all costs. A Saint

Ruler is far too strong for the Changyang clan to weather as it stands now, I don't want the clan to worry for me."

Dazed, You Yue continued to stare at Jian Chen. The grief and sorrow she had felt before had completely disappeared, but now, worry and concern had replaced it.

"I-I'm sorry, Jian Chen. I didn't know... about just how large this scale was." You Yue lamented.

Giving a small smile, Jian Chen shook his head, "You Yue, it is fine as long as you understand. The hatred between those two families and me is irreconcilable. Without that matter resolved, I really do not wish to waste time trying to start a family of my own."

You Yue was placated for now. She was now feeling better than when she had first entered the room, allowing Jian Chen to return to his own room in peace. However, as soon as Jian Chen walked into his drawing room, his entire figure grew rigid and a sharp light glinted in his eyes as if it was reflecting the light of a sword being drawn.

Seated in the room was a blue-robed elder with his back facing Jian Chen. Seated by the table, he drank a single cup of tea with only his own company to converse with.

This man had long, black hair that went down his back without a messy spot to be seen. At a glance, he appeared to be just a regular person with no outstanding traits.

However, this seemingly unimportant person made Jian Chen stare at him seriously as if prepared to take action at any moment against an enemy. This person was practically undetectable to even Jian Chen, and if it were not for his own eyes seeing the man, Jian Chen would have overlooked the man entirely.

The only ones capable of managing such a feat were hermits of the Saint Ruler level.

Having a Saint Ruler suddenly appear in his very own room was something that made Jian Chen nervous.

“Who are you?” Jian Chen questioned as he shifted his right hand behind his back to clench the jade piece in his hand. Since he could not fight against a Saint Ruler, then his only option was to ask for the assistance of the Huang patriarch.

“Haha, little brother, do not be nervous. This old man came for an impromptu visit. If I disturbed you, then please forgive me.” An elderly voice came from the mouth of the blue-robed man. Yet, he remained seated at the table with his back still facing Jian Chen.

Sensing no hostile aura around the man, Jian Chen eased up slightly while staring at the back of the man, “Senior, who might you be?”

“If you wish to know even that, then I’ll tell you this. That girl Huang Luan has already told you about her having a teacher. That is me, I am her teacher.” The man replied.

Jian Chen was astonished, and the look in his eyes reflected that astonishment. “Could you be the patriarch of the Huanggu clan?”

“Correct, that is I!”

With his identity confirmed, Jian Chen let out a mental sigh of relief. Although a Saint Ruler was undoubtedly a tremendous source of pressure to him, at least this one was no enemy to him.

“Little brother, come sit and let us talk.” The man suggested.

Easing back into the calm and easygoing nature of his, Jian Chen strode to the seat on the other side of the man and sat down. Straight away, Jian Chen could see the man’s face. It was a very ordinary-looking face that was filled with wrinkles due to age. The only difference was that a single blue seal sat in the middle of his forehead, but it was hard to make out the picture in full clarity because of the wrinkles.

The elder leveled a meaningful glance at Jian Chen, “Little brother, should I be calling you the Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom or the fourth master of the Changyang clan? Or perhaps — Jian Chen!?”

“Senior, please just call me Jian Chen.” He smiled.

The old man nodded his head just slightly, “Then I shall do so. Jian Chen, I am not one that enjoys beating around the bush, so I

shall get to the point.”

He paused for a brief moment to take in a breath of air, “Jian Chen, I came here specifically because of Huang Luan, so the matter we will be discussing will relate to Huang Luan herself.”

Jian Chen could feel his heart sink, “Could this be about the betrothment between your Huanggu clan and the Huang family?”

Shaking his head, the elder replied, “That matter has already been settled and dealt with. I won’t even bother to try and harangue the matter any longer. Instead, I came here today to talk about her future.”

“Senior, what might you mean by that?” Jian Chen asked, mystified at what the elderly figure was getting at.

Humming, the elder thought for a moment, trying to find the best way to describe his thoughts, “Huang Luan has a very particular body that comes once a thousand years on the continent. If she were to train with a water affinity cultivation method, her growth would be exponential. For that reason, I bequeathed the Saint Tier Cultivation Method to her so that she could learn twice the amount for half the effort. Becoming a Saint Ruler wouldn’t be difficult for her at all, but there is a single taboo she must not commit. Until she becomes a Sixth Cycle Heaven Saint Master, she must remain pure at all costs. Otherwise, the effects she will receive will be irrevocably disastrous for her.” The elder spoke with an increasingly grim voice.



Jian Chen had been listening on with the utmost seriousness, but when he heard what the patriarch said, he could not help but blush a little. Giving an embarrassed smile, he said, “Senior, you may rest assured. The relationship between Huang Luan and I is nowhere near such a situation.”

“That is good then.” The man nodded his head in satisfaction. “Jian Chen, you should know that for the sake of Huang Luang’s future, you must uphold her purity.”

“This junior understands!” Jian Chen scratched his nose in embarrassment. He couldn’t help but ask himself, was he really a person that wanted nothing but lust?

With that said and done, the patriarch stood up from his stool, “This old man has said all that he wanted to say, until we meet again then!” The next moment, the patriarch disappeared from the room without a trace.

Looking left and then right, Jian Chen could see that the windows and doors to the room were still tightly shut. There was virtually no way to escape from this sealed space, and no crack or crevice to be seen. With those factors to be considered, Jian Chen had to truly wonder how the patriarch had left.

“A Saint Ruler is truly powerful. The powers they possess are far beyond what I can imagine.” Jian Chen muttered with a twinge of jealousy.

“So Huang Luan’s talent stems from her body itself. No wonder

she was able to become an Earth Saint Master at such a young age...”

Several kilometers away, the patriarch of the Huanggu clan materialized out of thin air as if he had been a mirage. No longer teleporting here and there, the elder chose to instead fly the rest of the way at incredible speed.

“Now that I’ve told him that, he will most likely not see Huang Luan as a wife for now, leaving her body completely intact. Though, even if he wishes to do something unbecoming to her, the restriction I’ve placed on her will not let him get away.” The elder smiled darkly as if he was plotting something.

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In the blink of an eye, a year passed. In that year, the Flame Mercenaries had grown spectacularly and without ever stopping. The stronger factions of the several surrounding kingdoms had been completely annexed, including the factions from the Qiangang Kingdom, the Qianlong Kingdom, the Andreas Kingdom, the Pingyang Kingdom, and even some of the other kingdoms that had once nursed a grudge with the Gesun Kingdom. This made the Flame Mercenaries into a hegemon to be feared. Their members had exploded to over a hundred thousand with over five hundred Earth Saint Masters. Even several Heaven Saint Masters had been coerced into it, making the comparison to the past a very shocking one.

The Flame Mercenaries explosive growth made them a household name that everyone knew about. Practically every mercenary or

mercenary group would talk about the Flame Mercenaries with either eyes of envy or admiration.

The Flame Mercenaries had exploded in power so fast that the scale today could practically be considered a miracle made in real life.

Within a desolate piece of land, a group of people riding on mounts could be seen resting. Buildings could be seen all around them, and not too far away, several hundred fumes of fire spiraled into the air. Mercenaries sat around each of the fires in groups of threes or fours as they talked to one another over a piece of magical beast meat.

Hoisted overhead was an emblem of a ball of fire; this was the emblem of the Flame Mercenaries.

Seated at the very center of all the banners and tents was Jian Chen and the others who were currently discussing matters.

“Jian Chen, as of today, the Flame Mercenaries have reached a very definite scale of over a hundred thousand members. The time is ripe for us to create a city of our own.” Dugu Feng spoke.

# Chapter 593: A Vein Of Tungsten Alloy

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Jian Chen had to think about Dugu Feng's proposal for a brief moment. He knew that there were plenty of mercenary groups that managed to construct their own cities after gaining enough power. It was only when a mercenary group founded their own city that they had the right to say they were someone important on the Tian Yuan Continent.

Mercenary groups that owned a city were extremely strong, and the Flame Mercenaries paled in comparison to the majority of mercenary groups in power.

Although they had well over a hundred thousand members, the amount of people that were strong enough to assume responsibility over any single jurisdiction were far too few. Aside from Jian Chen, there were only three other Heaven Saint Masters. If they were to try to construct a city like this, it would be insanely difficult to maintain their power. They would end up as the losers if their city was besieged.

Not only was it a common for kingdoms to fight with another for power, mercenaries would often times move into cities and attempt to seize power almost as often.

With those factors in mind, Jian Chen finally made up his mind and said, "Our Flame Mercenaries might be strong in our area, but our strength is still limited to just this small area. We are not quite yet strong enough to attempt to build a city, so we should hold off for now."

“I agree. Our group, the Flame Mercenaries, is quite strong, but there is still a huge threat of internal danger. Therefore, we should refocus our efforts in trying to resolve the matters with all of the members. We must ensure that the relationship between each and every mercenary is as tight as a twine of rope. Otherwise, the Flame Mercenaries that we built up with will crumble at the base and collapse sooner or later.” You Yue added her insight.

“Is that so? Then why don’t we spend the next period of time listening to you when dealing with internal matters. You Yue, Bi Lian, I’ll leave this to you to handle. If there is anything you need from me, go ahead and ask.” Jian Chen replied. In this short moment of time, the Flame Mercenaries had been left up to You Yue and Bi Lian to administrate. After being tested for an entire year, Jian Chen had seen more than enough to be convinced that the two of them were talented in this aspect.

Bi Lian’s cultivation talent was not unique. She hadn’t even managed to form her Saint Weapon yet, but her keen wit and intelligence was unbelievably sharp. It was better honed than You Yue’s intelligence in several aspects. It was almost as if she was born to be a superior administrator.

“A report for the captain, we’ve received a letter to give to you!” At that moment, a single voice called out from outside.

“Hand it over!”

“Yes!” The flaps of the tent blew open as the white-robed Ha Ni came walking in. In his hand was a snow-white Lightning Bird.

Taking the Lightning Bird from Ha Ni into his own hands, he untied the letter around its leg. He then unfurled it to read.

“Important! Return to Changyang Manor!”

Only a meager few words had been scrawled on the letter, causing Jian Chen’s expression to become very grim.

Taking note of the sudden change in expression, everyone nervously tensed up. It was You Yue that finally asked out of concern, “Jian Chen, what happened?”

Jian Chen studied the letter once more to verify that it wasn’t a fake message. Then, slowly tearing it into several pieces, he explained, “A letter came from back home telling me to return to the Changyang Clan. We’ll have the mercenaries stay here for now and wait for my return. If something urgent happens, notify me by the twin jade stones.”

Bidding farewell to You Yue and the others, Jian Chen went and found the other three Heaven Saint Masters to give them their instructions. Afterward, he flew with great speed through the air back to Changyang Manor.

By the time he arrived, it was already nightfall. As he began to descend to the ground, the Chang Wuji immediately made himself known. He was able to pinpoint him the moment he touched solid ground.

“Fourth master, you’ve returned rather quickly I see.” Chang Wuji smiled.

Jian Chen let out a secret sigh of relief when he saw the relaxed face of Chang Wuji. From the very start of his rush back home, he had been worried that something had happened to the family.

“Chang Wuji, what has happened for you to ask me to come home at once?” Jian Chen asked.

“I do not know the details, but men from the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom came with a very important message to tell you. They said it was a matter that couldn’t be delayed. Your father sent a message for you to return right away.” The elder explained the best he could.

“Heavenly Eagle Kingdom? Did that kingdom not cease to exist?” Jian Chen tilted his head in confusion.

Unable to stop himself from chuckling, Chang Wuji smiled at Jian Chen, “Perhaps I should have phrased it differently. The seven heads of the territories that once belonged to the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom came here with an important message for you. Fourth master, they are currently in the discussion hall. We should head on over.”

Shortly after that, Jian Chen and Chang Wuji entered the manor and headed straight for the main halls. On the way, plenty of guards saluted him while the maids and servants bowed down with

the most respect they could muster.

It did not take long for Jian Chen to enter the halls themselves. He noticed that plenty of people were already gathered here. Most noticeable was his father and mother, the other important elders of the Changyang clan, and a sturdy-looking middle-aged man who was currently in deep discussion with someone else.

The arrival of Jian Chen was apparent to everyone. They lined up shoulder to shoulder and bowed to cordially greet Jian Chen. At this moment, everyone in the halls was filled with respect for him.

The middle-aged man that had been discussing stuff with everyone else came forward to bow and greet Jian Chen personally, “Captain of the Bloodmoon Mercenaries, Tynes, pays his respects to the Imperial Protector!”

After the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom dissolved, it had been split into seven partitions. The Bloodmoon Mercenaries had subsequently become the overseers of one of those seven partitions.

Regaling the man, Jian Chen said, “Tynes, what important matter was it that you needed to inform me of? What can you tell me about it?”

Looking around the hall, Tynes hesitated to speak, “Imperial Protector, this is a matter of utmost secrecy, so...”



Understanding his intentions, Jian Chen replied, “If that is so, then we shall speak in my own residence.”

“Yes, Imperial Protector!”

Looking to his father, Changyang Ba and his mother, Bi Yuntian, Jian Chen said, “Father, mother, your son has matters to take care of. I will be leaving first.”

“Xiang’er, captain Tynes has trekked countless of kilometers to run to the Changyang clan. If it is a serious issue, you needn’t worry about your parents, go and take care of what you need to do!” Changyang Ba laughed.

“Xiang’er, time is of the essence, go and do what you must.” Bi Yuntian softly replied. A son that was as outstanding yet filial as Jian Chen was a son that she felt an exorbitant amount of pride in.

Exchanging several more words of greeting to the other members in the hall, Jian Chen led Tynes back to his own building.

“Tynes, what important matter do you have to tell me? Has the Sect of Dragon and Tiger decided to mobilize against you?” Jian Chen inquired with a solemn expression.

Tynes shook his head and looked carefully around the place. Then, speaking into Jian Chen’s ear, he whispered, “Imperial Protector, we have discovered a tremendous deposit of tungsten alloy.”

“What? A tremendous deposit of tungsten alloy?” A spark glinted in Jian Chen’s eyes as he murmured to himself. Tungsten alloys were extremely sparse on the continent and worth several times their weight in purple coins. A single kilogram was already worth ten kilograms worth of purple coins.

“Yes, Imperial Protector, our Bloodmoon Mercenaries came across this vein in one of the mountains by pure accident. After further investigations, we’ve found an even larger vein. Based off a shallow investigation, we concluded that the purity of the ore is at least eighty-five-percent.” Tynes’ voice quavered.

Jian Chen felt a gasp escape his lips, and his heart began to beat even faster. A purity rate of eighty-five-percent meant that out of a hundred ores, eighty-five of them could be smelted into tungsten alloy.

“How many people know about this place?” Jian Chen suddenly asked.

“I’ve killed off all those that knew this knowledge outside my group, meaning there’s only fifty or so people that do. They are all confidences of mine, and I am sure that they will safeguard the secret of this vein as strictly as I.” Tynes replied seriously.

A sigh of relief escaped Jian Chen’s mind. A vein of tungsten alloy was practically an immeasurable source of wealth since a single kilogram of tungsten alloy was worth ten times its weight in purple coins. If news of this got out, then there would definitely be

bloodshed over it.

“Imperial Protector. This vein of tungsten alloy is extremely precious and tempting for any faction to give up. If news of this were to leak out, then we would have no power to protect it. Imperial Protector, how do you propose we handle this situation, should we have the Qinhuang Kingdom oversee it?”

After a careful moment of consideration, Jian Chen replied, “If news of the vein has not been leaked out, then let it remain a secret in the meanwhile. Tynes, hurry back and see over it yourself for now. Have the other seven factions join with you to protect it in secret and extract it in secret. Remember, the less people that know about this, the better. News of this cannot be divulged at any costs, I’ll figure out what to do after.”

“Yes, Imperial Protector.” Tynes bowed and cupped his hands in salute.

“There’s no time to waste, hurry back over.”

# Chapter 594: Hurrying Off To The Heavenly Eagle Kingdom

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Tynes left for the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom straight away. With how precious the tungsten alloy was, he couldn't possibly dare try and be negligent over a plethora of wealth like that. There were no Heaven Saint Masters safeguarding it, so Jian Chen felt some discomfort at this matter. He was afraid that the news would be leaked.

Pacing around the middle of his room with his hands clasped behind his back, Jian Chen's mind raced with ideas about how to deal with the tungsten alloy vein. Unknowingly, the small tiger cub had leaped onto his shoulder and stared at him. Its originally bright eyes had already grown dim as if it was growing listless.

"It appears I must bring the Flame Mercenaries over to the territory of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom." Jian Chen concluded.

After thinking to himself for another hour, Jian Chen left his room to call his mother for a meal before leaving the Changyang clan.

All sorts of dishes were placed in a beautiful arrangement on top of the table as Jian Chen, Changyang Ba, Bi Yuntian, and the other three wives of his father sat together and talked. The fact that Jian Chen was the captain of the Flame Mercenaries had already been revealed to his aunts, but it was still a very puzzling thing to think about how he was also the Imperial Protector of both the Qinhuang and Gesun Kingdom.

After a brief interrogation by his aunts, Jian Chen explained everything without losing his temper. There were no secrets in regards to the Flame Mercenaries to his mother after all.

“Xiang’er, you’ve done the right thing. If Kendall saved you, then you must fulfill the promise you gave for it to be a fair trade.” Changyang Ba approved.

“Xiang’er, in your times of travel outside, have you come across any news of your sister?” Bi Yuntian suddenly blurted out.

Jian Chen could only shake his head with regret. He sighed. “Aunty, your child has searched without end, but nothing of importance has come up.”

Yu Fengyan’s face became more sorrowful at his words, “Wretched girl, who knows what far away place she has run off to. Why hasn’t she even sent a letter back home? Even now, I have naught one letter from her and naught even a clue on where my Mingyue has gone... what if she...” Halfway through her words, Yu Fengyan could no longer stop herself from descending into a fit of sobs. Her own daughter had left the clan one day without warning or trace, causing her to feel extremely anxious and scared for the well-being of her daughter.

The table grew quiet after that. Each person seated there had a grim look on their face; every person at this table, besides Jian Chen, were either aunts or a parent to Changyang Mingyue, and had seen her grow since birth. So her disappearance had been

extremely worrisome to them all. Jian Chen had disappeared once, but he had been of a different situation and had come back.

“Second aunt, please be at peace. Second sister has always been a lucky person; she won’t come across any trouble. Look at me, I left the Gesun Kingdom for several years by myself without anything harmful coming my way.” Jian Chen consoled her, but to no avail. Yu Fengyan and the others simply did not think that Changyang Mingyue had the same capabilities as Jian Chen.

A single woman traveling the continent by herself was a feat that was several times more dangerous than for a male. All sorts of unsavory mercenaries and bandits roamed the continent, it would not be uncommon for them to act upon their lust for women.

“Ai, our daughter has grown up with a rebellious nature. We are to blame for that. If we did not try to force her into an arranged marriage, she would not have left home.” Changyang Ba sighed bitterly with regret.

“Father, second aunt, please rest assured. I will definitely have my men scour the continent to find second sister.” Jian Chen resolutely pledged. When he was young, Changyang Mingyue had been very caring to him, and he had left the Changyang Manor with a very favorable impression of her. The disappearance of Changyang Mingyue had left him feeling very melancholic

“Forget it. There’s no point in talking about this matter for now. We’ve gone over it more than enough with nothing to show for our efforts.” Changyang Ba sighed before turning to Jian Chen, “Xiang’er, your father still has something that I hope you’ll agree

to.”

“You and your third aunt, Ling Long, have harbored some ill will with one another, that I know. Your third aunt has a small level of tolerance for matters like these due to experiences she has had in the past. Her making life difficult for you was a result of these experiences, but even now, she and your third brother have felt remorse for their actions. They have not been eating with the rest of the family because of their guilt. So, your father wishes that you will understand and forgive your third aunt.” Changyang Ba spoke. There was a slight pleading tone to his words. A sound that was exceedingly rare, especially to a child as the head of a family.

Jian Chen was more than willing to agree to his father’s request. He did not feel completely disgusted by the actions of his third aunt. They were by rights family, and Jian Chen was disinclined to ruin a perfectly warm and receiving household with an opinion he didn’t hold.

The fact that he was willing to let bygones be bygones pleased Jian Chen’s father to no end.

Afterward, Jian Chen took out a small portion of the hundred grass wine given to him by the Ape King. Pouring the cups evenly, he distributed them all to the people around the table. As soon as each person took a sip, they could feel their inner strength explode with newfound power. Just three months ago, Changyang Ba had managed to become a Second Cycle Earth Saint Master. He now stepped into the Third Cycle with the assistance of the wine!

Baiyu Shuang and Ling Long both felt themselves jumping to the

Advanced Saint Master level, and even Bi Yuntian, who had never materialized her Saint Weapon, felt the benefits come flowing in her. She had been a Third Class Radiant Saint Master before, but a single sip was more than enough to eclipse all of her hard work before to propel her into the Fourth Class.

Chang Wuji had been invited to take a sip as well. For a Heaven Saint Master like him, a sip of the hundred grass wine was only enough to increase his inner Saint Force by a small increment. The small increase had not been enough to reach a breakthrough like Khafir, the headmaster of Kargath Academy, had.

With the wine drunk and the food eaten, Jian Chen followed his parents back to visit his eldest brother, Changyang Hu. Changyang Hu was confined to the bed without even the most basic of motor abilities since he had lost his limbs. He couldn't eat or change his clothes without help. A life that was robbed of any freedom of movement was a life that words could hardly begin to describe the cruelty of.

The sight of his own older brother in such a wretched state caused Jian Chen's heart to ache. He wanted nothing more than to find a way to become a Seventh Class Radiant Saint Master, so he could find some sort method to restore the decapitated limbs of Changyang Hu.

On the morning of the second day, Jian Chen visited Lore city to find Sans and Kendall's wife. The mother and son had been able to open a rather big inn on one of the more flourishing streets because of the staunch support of the Changyang clan. Business was booming and the patrons flowed in and out like an endless



stream of water. With the name of the Changyang clan waved over them, their inn had soon enough become one of the safest inns in the city. No incidents ever took place within their building, meaning that mercenaries and merchants alike could gather here in peace.

Farewells were given to the two before Jian Chen flew out of Lore City. He was back in the air headed toward the desolate lands where the Flame Mercenaries were. Once there, Jian Chen called for an impromptu meeting with the men.

“Jian Chen, what is the matter for you to rush us like this?” As soon as they were gathered within the tent, Ming Dong immediately found his voice to speak up.

Seated at his own chair up front, Jian Chen looked at the group with people with a grim expression. “Pass on my orders. We will pack up camp and head straight for the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom without rest.”

The entire group was stunned by this order, and it was You Yue who asked a question first, “Even through the night? Jian Chen, what is the matter?”

“Yes, even through the night.” Jian Chen nodded his head. “Go and spread the news to everyone. I will be leaving first.”

“Jian Chen, why has the situation become all frantic-like? Has some sort of accident come up or something?” Ming Dong cried out.

“Allow me to keep this a secret for now. I’ll tell you about it when we arrive at our destination. Disperse and make the preparations. I’ll be leaving first.” As soon as he finished speaking, Jian Chen exited the tent and flew off toward the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom with haste.

Two days later, Jian Chen arrived within the territory of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom. Hurrying to recall a mental map of the seven partitioned territories, Jian Chen then flew off to the Bloodmoon Mercenaries land.

As the dominating power in one of the seven areas, the location of the Bloodmoon Mercenaries was found relatively quickly once Jian Chen asked around. Jian Chen had made the rest of the trip in no time at all.

The headquarters of the Bloodmoon Mercenaries was situated within a revised castle. It did not hide the flying figure of Jian Chen from anyone’s sight. With the fact that Jian Chen had not bothered to make his traveling discreet, the captain of the Bloodmoon Mercenaries was quickly notified of his arrival. He swiftly moved to welcome him, “A thousand welcomes for the Imperial Protector!”

“What is the current situation? Has news of the tungsten alloy remained a secret?” Jian Chen whispered.

“Here is my report. Everything has been taken care of, and the secret has remained a secret. Aside from a few reliable brothers-in-

arms, not a single outsider knows of it. Even the men of the other six factions remain unaware of this secret.” Tynes spoke.

Nodding his head in satisfaction, Jian Chen replied, “Good, you’ve done well. For your services today, I will reward you nicely in time.”

“For the honor of the Qinhuang Kingdom and the Imperial Protector, it is the honor of mine to serve.” Tynes solemnly replied.

Jian Chen laughed, “Well, where is the location of the mine? Take me there.”

“Yes!”

# Chapter 595: Return To Mercenary City (One)

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The distance between the vein of tungsten alloy and the Bloodmoon Mercenaries was not that far apart. It was about fifty kilometers behind the castle. However, this location was surrounded by a hundred kilometers of forest whose environment and wildlife were both vile. Poisonous creatures, swamps, and dangerous beasts all coexisted in this place.

The location of the vein of tungsten alloy was indeed here. At the very center of this forest was a single cave that could only be seen and entered by through a ravine.

Evening around this ravine came with little to no visibility, thanks to the fact that the sun would drop far beneath the horizon and bask the entire forest in darkness.

The darkness was pierced by a single orb of azure and yellow. That orb was Jian Chen and Tynes. They were traveling to the entrance of the ravine with Jian Chen's flying abilities.

The arrival of the two people flying immediately alerted the figures hidden in the forest below. At the sight of Tynes, they all moved to salute the two, "Captain!"

Tynes turned back to look at Jian Chen, "Imperial Protector, these are all men of the Earth Saint Master level, and are men worthy of my trust to protect the secret of this mine."

“Satisfactory work.” Jian Chen smiled to each and every single one of the men there.

Laughing, Tynes spoke to his men next, “Scatter yourselves and hide once more. Keep a watch out for anyone else that approaches. Kill them on sight!”

“Yes!” Each person saluted in response before blending in with the shadows. They disappeared out of sight, hiding in the surroundings of the ravine.

“Imperial Protector, the vein of tungsten alloy was completely discovered by accident in this ravine.” Tynes pointed out.

“Come, show me the way.”

Jian Chen and Tynes quickly descended into the rather shallow and narrow ravine. It was more of a gully rather than ravine due to the fact that grass had grown here and there in large quantities.

Surveying the grass from above, Jian Chen slowly closed his eyes. He allowed his presence to encompass the surrounding five kilometers, penetrating any solid wall that might obstruct his way.

Under the strong detection abilities of his presence, Jian Chen was able to see through the boulders and walls as if they weren't even there. However, when his presence snaked into the area below, Jian Chen couldn't help but let a sigh escape from his lips.

This place was practically a giant mountain of tungsten alloy with a purity that matched perfectly with Tynes' description. The tremendous quantity of the tungsten alloy was enough to leave Jian Chen tongue-tied, and with his presence, he was able to dig five meters deep into the ground to probe the area even more. Giving him an even greater shock was that there was even more tungsten alloy than what was initially measured. The extent in which the vein extended was more than enough to leave any man utterly inconsolable even.

Now knowing the situation behind the hidden cave, Jian Chen could finally let out a breath of relief. His heart had been pacing wildly before when he had first started his examination, but now he was back to his original state of mind.

Now that his emotions were completely quelled, Jian Chen began to extend his presence once more. His presence pushed deeper and deeper, investigating just how large this hidden vein of tungsten alloy was.

With the vast speed of his presence extending into the ground, Jian Chen soon reached roughly ten kilometers into the ground. Thanks to his skill with spreading his presence, Jian Chen could conclude that this was a very pure vein all in all. The deeper he went, the purer the vein was. Now that he was ten kilometers deep, Jian Chen could see that the purity of this vein was at least ninety-percent, perhaps even close to a hundred. In other words, this was no longer a mine of tungsten alloy but a subterranean area completely made of tungsten alloy.

Faced with such a discovery, Jian Chen felt hardpressed to quell his emotions this time. His entire body began to shake because of the excitement he felt, but he did not stop his investigation. He continued on.

Eleven kilometers...

Twelve kilometers...

Thirteen kilometers...

Fourteen kilometers...

Soon enough, Jian Chen reached the fifteen kilometer limit that he could extend his presence to. At that point, Jian Chen's expression took on a startled expressions.

Just slightly beneath the fifteenth kilometer point, Jian Chen could barely detect an abnormally strong surge of energy with his presence. It was almost as if there was a barrier preventing him from detecting anything else underneath the protective layering. Even the immensity of the barrier itself was an unknown variable to him.

“What is that?” Jian Chen murmured to himself. This sudden oddity was far outside his expectations. It was unfortunate that his presence could not reach beyond this fifteen kilometer stopping point since he had no other way to investigate this strange energy.

He then investigated the surrounding area with his presence before finally withdrawing it. He stared down at the ground with furrowed eyebrows as he tried to think. This barrier made him curious, and completely overshadowed the joy he felt from the discovery of how far down the tungsten alloy stretched.

“If only my presence was strong enough. As things stand now, it’s futile to try and see what lies beyond that barrier, but I can at the very least explore it in the future.” Jian Chen thought to himself.

Right by Jian Chen’s side, Tynes had noticed the puzzled look on Jian Chen’s face. He asked in concern, “Imperial Protector, what is the matter?”

“Tynes, what is the history behind this valley? Is there perhaps any legends about this place?” Jian Chen asked.

“I have heard no such thing before.” Tynes shook his head after wracking his mind for any pertinent information.

Letting out a sigh in defeat, Jian Chen looked around the entire valley with his presence. About twenty meters beyond the area they were in, the tungsten alloy deteriorated into a purity rate of fifty-percent. By fifty meters, the amount of tungsten alloy was practically nil with just stone and dirt left in its place.

After investigating the entire valley, Jian Chen could finally ascertain that the heart of the tungsten alloy was located within a diameter of a hundred meters of this place. The tungsten alloy at



the very heart of the valley was the purest at about eighty-five percent purity.

Now that his investigations were completely over, Jian Chen and Tynes returned to the headquarters of the Bloodmoon Mercenaries.

At the very top of the castle where the Bloodmoon Mercenaries lived, Jian Chen could be seen conversing with Tynes and the other high-ranking members of the Bloodmoon Mercenaries.

“Excavate the tungsten alloy as soon as you can while ensuring that no one learns of its existence. There should be no reason that anyone should learn about it. Tynes, I’ll leave it up to you to deal with this.” Jian Chen commanded.

“But, Imperial Protector, the purity of these ores is already an issue to be considered. Combined with the magical properties of the tungsten alloy that makes it a hundred times stronger than reinforced steel, a year wouldn’t be enough time to make even a single dent in the amount of ores.” A black-robed elder spoke. This elder in particular was an Earth Saint Master and a senior figure of the mercenaries.

“Imperial Protector, I’ve already notified the head of the other six heads. Should we tell them the news as well? Perhaps have them choose a single reliable person to go extract the ore?” Tynes offered.

“Yes, I can agree to that notion. Wait until those six arrive and

then tell them the news.” Jian Chen replied.

Half a month later, the rest of the six heads had finally assembled at the headquarters of the Bloodmoon Mercenaries. With all seven gathered, Jian Chen re-engaged in another series of secret discussions. He delegated tasks to everyone to help with the extraction of the ore.

This meeting took a significantly longer amount of time since Jian Chen had to discuss several aspects of confidentiality with seven Heaven Saint Masters. These preliminary matters covered such items as who would extract the ore, who would transport it, and who would refine it in secret.

On the second day, Tynes immediately led five hundred of his most trustworthy men to extract the ore with the pretense of hunting for magical beasts. Simultaneously, the other six leaders dispatched several of their men to different areas of the mountain range for reconnaissance.

With the combined actions of the seven, information of the tungsten alloy was completely suppressed, and the tungsten alloy was finally being extracted. Under the command of Jian Chen, the entire valley was surveyed and mining operations were started.

He still felt very curious about that mysterious barrier several kilometers beneath the earth, but Jian Chen had no way to get close to it because of the tungsten alloy in his way. The only way to get to it would be to dig a path down.

The next few days were very calm and peaceful. Jian Chen was the only one who stayed to oversee the miners along with Tynes. This was to hide the fact that they were extracting tungsten alloy. The other leaders returned to their own territories to avoid any insightful person from connecting the dots and realizing something was amiss. However, the seven had established a means of quick communication with each other. If there was even the slightest deviation from the plans, they would all be notified and would arrive at the castle of the Bloodmoon Mercenaries as fast as they could.

Ten days later, the Flame Mercenaries reached the Bloodmoon Mercenary's territory. Finally, they garrisoned themselves within the castle. The three Heaven Saint Masters and five hundred Earth Saint Masters were included in the group, making the Bloodmoon Mercenaries stronger than before.

Jian Chen did not hide any information about the tungsten alloy from Ming Dong and the others. He told them about it all. However, Zhan Tian, the other captains, and the Heaven Saint Masters remained clueless about the ore.

When the time came for them to understand the magnitude of the tungsten alloy, each one of them felt so shocked that their jaws dropped wide open.

“A tremendous deposit of tungsten alloy like this is extremely rare on the continent. Should this make its way out, there will definitely be turmoil all over the place. Even a few of the isolated families or the Eight Great Powers would mobilize for such an event. With our strength alone, it would be difficult to maintain

this.” Huang Luan grimly remarked.

Equally grim, Jian Chen nodded his head, “I’ve already locked down any communication about this information. If this information does leak, then I will have the Qinhuang Kingdom step in.”

“My Huang family is strong. If there is a need for it, then I’ll have the ancestor of my family step in as well.”

# Chapter 596: Return To Mercenary City

## (Two)

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Jian Chen's eyes lit up when he heard Huang Luan's suggestion. He did not know how strong the Saint Ruler was, but he definitely belonged to the higher echelons of the chart if he was able to go toe-to-toe with two other Saint Rulers. In the case that a Saint Ruler did help Jian Chen, then very few people would dare work against him.

“Wait for a situation to arise before we call on your ancestor to help us.” Jian Chen smiled. Aside from the four Imperial Protectors from the Qinhuang Kingdom, he also had the help of the ancestor from the Huang family. Jian Chen felt no desire to use those five at the wrong moment.

Jian Chen was not delusional. He knew that he would not be able to ask Ming Dong's uncle figure for assistance. The Saint Ruler was very unwilling to complicate himself with any external affairs, and even the priceless tungsten alloy would not be enough to shake his neutrality.

However, no leaks of information had been made about the tungsten alloy. Aside from Jian Chen's group, only the seven leaders and their men knew about it. The excavators had all their storage items confiscated during their time in the mines in order to prevent news or evidence from being spread. Even their movements were limited to only ten meters beyond the mines.

The Flame Mercenaries were stationed within the castle of the Bloodmoon Mercenaries while all of this was going on. When the

seven leaders heard that it was Jian Chen himself who led the group, they immediately expressed their desires to join the Flame Mercenaries. The Flame Mercenaries exploded once more in strength after those seven joined. All of the land that had belonged to the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom was fully engulfed by Jian Chen, and there were plenty of experts from this land. Aside from Jian Chen, there were nearly a dozen other Heaven Saint Masters among the mercenaries now, making the Flame Mercenaries a household name within the surrounding hundred thousand kilometers.

The following days were calm while the tungsten alloy was methodically extracted. Every day, an abundant amount of ore was collected, and the key figures in the operation, such as Jian Chen, were happy to see the stockpile grow.

“When all of the tungsten alloy is extracted, we’ll definitely have enough to use it for our city.” Ming Dong spoke with a quavering voice.

“If this tungsten alloy is to be used to construct the city, then its defensive strength would be among the strongest on the continent, comparable to the seven Capital Cities!” Even the normally quiet-spoken Dugu Feng’s eyes filled with an expectant look.

“We could even use the tungsten alloy to craft a lot of armor for the elite soldiers to wear!” Bi Lian piped up in excitement.

Everyone quickly suggested how they should use the tungsten alloy. They just needed to wait until they knew how much tungsten alloy they now possessed. Then they could go ahead with

their plan.

In the blink of an eye, three months passed while Jian Chen stayed in the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom. Nothing out of the ordinary happened during these three months, and the lockdown on the tungsten alloy remained as strict as ever. The tension from safeguarding this secret weighed heavily on Jian Chen's heart.

Early one morning, Jian Chen opened his eyes from his seated position on his bed and looked out the window. Memories of the little fatty he met in Longevity Valley suddenly cropped up out of nowhere.

"I promised to meet him again a single year after I left the valley. It's about time that I make good on that promise and visit the valley." Jian Chen muttered as he stepped out of his room. Over the past few months, he had remembered that fatty several times, but he had to put off the trip until later because of the matters at hand. Now that there seemed to be no foreseeable changes in the extraction of the tungsten alloy, he decided that there was no need to delay the trip to Longevity Valley any longer.

As soon as he walked out of his room, Jian Chen convened with the others to announce that he would be leaving for a short period of time.

"Jian Chen, where are you going? Let me go with you." Huang Luan asked, reluctant to part ways with Jian Chen again.

"I have an important matter to return to Mercenary City for. But

I'll be home soon enough, so remain here in the meanwhile." Jian Chen shook his head declining her request.

A disappointed look appeared in her eyes after that.

"Jian Chen, go quick and return early!" You Yue was equally reluctant to part with Jian Chen. Despite her reluctance, however, she knew that this trip was unavoidable for him.

Nodding his head, Jian Chen said, "If nothing happens, I should be back home soon."

Ming Dong walked forward to slap Jian Chen on the shoulder. He said in a serious tone, "Brother, if you need to go, we will not stop you, but you have to be careful. Should the Jiede clan and the Shi family see you, you must head to Mercenary City. They won't dare touch you there."

Laughing, Jian Chen replied, "Worry not. I know just how to handle myself should that situation occur. Aside from their Saint Rulers, I should have no problem with the rest of the family."

Out of nowhere, Bi Lian appeared around his arm, "Cousin, your little relative has a wish that I hope you can fulfill."

Seeing the coquettish actions of his younger cousin, Jian Chen could only laugh, "Say it then. Whatever it is that you want, your cousin will make sure to accomplish it for you." Jian Chen doted a lot on his younger cousin.



Whirling her head to look at the little tiger on Jian Chen's shoulder, she said with a mischievous smile, "Could you leave behind Xiao Bai, I want to play with him."

The tiger was a very intelligent creature and understood exactly what Bi Lian had asked. As quick as lightning, it jumped from Jian Chen's left shoulder to his right shoulder to avoid Bi Lian. The cub then tightly hugged Jian Chen's neck with its paws, and its eyes vigilantly watched Bi Lian.

As if annoyed by what the tiger cub had done, Bi Lian stared at him with her arms on her hips, "Xiao Bai, am I really that scary? I fed you some roasted meat the past few days, and this is how you repay me? You won't even let me hug you."

"Mrrrowrrrrrrr..." Xiao Bai let loose a mournful sound that not everyone understood, but its paws gripped around Jian Chen's neck even tighter, meaning that it was very reluctant to split with Jian Chen.

"Forget it, Bi Lian. Xiao Bai may as well be Jian Chen's shadow. You'd have a better chance climbing the ladder to the heavens than separating Xiao Bai from Jian Chen." You Yue giggled.

"Bi Lian, this is a request that I can't help you with. I am not one to force Xiao Bai to do what he doesn't want." Jian Chen apologetically smiled.

"Hmph, forget it then!" Bi Lian glared balefully at Xiao Bai in

disappointment.

With Xiao Bai on his shoulders still, Jian Chen bade farewell to the rest of the group and left. He had originally wanted to leave Xiao Bai here instead of carrying him around since he would have to pass Mercenary City to reach Longevity Valley. It was a trip that did not guarantee security, but the tiger cub had remained completely deaf to any words Jian Chen said. Unable to convince the tiger cub, he could only allow the cub to go with him.

Today's weather was extraordinarily good. The sun was shining bright and not a single cloud could be seen, leaving the sky a boundless canvas of azure.

Flying a thousand meters into the sky, Jian Chen headed straight for the Dazhou Kingdom so that he could use their Space Gate to reach Mercenary City.

The tiger cubs sense of smell had improved by several degrees because of its recent growth. Every so often when Jian Chen flew over a forest, it would just barely be able to sniff out the heavenly resources hidden around the verdant plants. Some were over a thousand years old in age and shocked Jian Chen. It was as Rum Guinness had described, the tiger cub would gain the ability to search and find heavenly resources with its own strength.

It took several days for Jian Chen to arrive at the frontier of the Dazhou Kingdom, but as soon as he hit the boundary of the kingdom, Jian Chen came to a stop mid-flight. Thinking for a bit, he immediately flew off in a different direction than before.

Several hours after Jian Chen had changed directions and left the Dazhou Kingdom, he arrived at the bordering Zhuya Kingdom. Heading within its borders, Jian Chen flew straight for the First Class city, Walaurent City.

Jian Chen touched down in a relatively empty location. He used his memories to follow a path through the city before finally coming to a stop right outside a large mansion.

The mansion that Jian Chen stopped in front of possessed a giant signboard right above it that read, “Tianqin clan.” These two words radiated a seemingly magical feeling to them and brought forth a deluge of memories from several years ago. Unable to stop himself, Jian Chen began to replay the memories of when he and Ming Dong had first come to this city.

Qin Xiao had left the biggest impression on Jian Chen while he was in Walaurent City.

“Hey, you there! What are you doing spacing out in front of the gates of the Tianqin clan? Get lost, this isn’t a place you can block the road!” While Jian Chen’s was thinking, one of the guards shouted at him and disrupted his daydream.

Waking up to reality, Jian Chen looked at the burly figure next to him. He cupped his hands and gave a polite greeting, “Would you perhaps know if the young master, Qin Xiao, is inside?”

Stopping in his stride to size Jian Chen up, the guard noticed that

the robes Jian Chen wore were quite expensive, and the air to him was unordinary. Immediately growing wary, the guard asked, “Who are you? The young master Qin Xiao is not someone that anyone can see on a whim.”

“This one is Jian Chen, a friend of the young master Qin Xiao.” Jian Chen cupped his hands. Despite this person being only a guard, Jian Chen was calm and polite to him.

“What? You’re Jian Chen?” The guard immediately felt surprised to hear his name. Straight away, the expression on the guard’s face changed to a smile, “Ah, so it is indeed lord Jian Chen. This lowly guard must be blind if he could not recognize lord Jian Chen. Please forgive me, lord Jian Chen. The young master Qin Xiao said before that should lord Jian Chen arrive, we are to bring him straight in.” The guard welcomed Jian Chen within the compound politely while notifying another guard to report to Qin Xiao.

# Chapter 597: Return To Mercenary City

## (Three)

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Jian Chen was received by the Tianqin clan once more. He was honored at the compound just like the last time he was here. Even the head and the senior figures of the clan made their way over to greet Jian Chen. Jian Chen was, after all, the King of Mercenaries — a status that the Tianqin clan would not dare show arrogance to.

As he was being warmly received, Jian Chen finally met up with Qin Xiao. Years may have gone by, but Qin Xiao had not changed much, whether it was his personality or his body. However, his strength had increased a tremendous amount since he was now an Earth Saint Master.

The moment Qin Xiao saw Jian Chen, he became ecstatic, and wrapped him into a hug, “Hey, Jian Chen! I’ve been waiting for you return. Any later and I would have gone looking for you instead.”

Untying himself from the embrace, Jian Chen gave a cursory appraisal of Qin Xiao before approving of the change, “Not bad, you’ve become an Earth Saint Master. What talent you have. If I’m not wrong, you’ve only just hit the age of thirty. Hmm, a thirty year old becoming an Earth Saint Master. That’s an achievement that the entire Tian Yuan Continent would regard as true talent.”

Replying for his son, the head of the Tianqin clan laughed with pride. “Qin’er is talented indeed. Even in our Zhuya Kingdom, there is not a single person that holds as much potential as he does. Just half a year ago, the king himself betrothed his daughter to

Qin'er. Many of the other factions of the kingdom have already tried their hand at arranging a marriage as well!"

Nodding at the man, Jian Chen looked to Qin Xiao, "Qin Xiao, is that true? You're wedded now?"

An embarrassed look overcame Qin Xiao's face when he heard Jian Chen's question. Laughing, he said, "The wedding day has already been established. In two years, I will be wed to the third princess of the Zhuya Kingdom. Jian Chen, you and Ming Dong have to make sure that you attend my wedding."

"Of course, of course we will." Jian Chen laughed with joy because of Tianqin's excitement.

Moving on, Jian Chen and Qin Xiao walked deeper into the courtyards of the clan, talking as they pleased.

Entirely out of the blue, Qin Xiao blurted out a single question as soon as they were alone, "Jian Chen, although I am not of the same level of strength as brother Ming Dong, I am still an Earth Saint Master and a man capable of my own decisions. I've stayed with the Tianqin clan long enough. Would it be possible for me to follow you during your travels through the continent?"

"Really? Of course you can! As things turn out, I have founded a mercenary group that is short of people I can trust at the moment. If you're willing, why not join my mercenary group?" Jian Chen laughed.

“Coincidentally enough,” Qin Xiao began with a bright look in his eyes, “I had been entertaining the notion of creating a mercenary group with you, but since you’ve beaten me to the punch, I’ll save my breath. Jian Chen, when will we leave? Staying around the Tianqin clan has bored me to death. I’ve had half a mind to leave earlier already.”

Evasively, Jian Chen shook his head when he saw the impatient look on Qin Xiao’s face, “I estimate that there’ll be some time before then. I still need to take a trip to Mercenary City and the surrounding area. When I come back from, I’ll be able to bring you to the mercenary group I made.”

Not even a moment after Jian Chen finished speaking, the gentle and refined sounds of a zither could be heard being played. The notes were delightful and pleasant to the ears. It was almost like they were filled with an enchanting type of magic that captivated any listener. The music caused Qin Xiao and Jian Chen to stop their conversation for just a moment. By listening to the music of the zither, the two of them felt calm and tranquil, like undisturbed water.

At a pavilion nearby, a white-robed, young woman could be seen seated on a stone table as she plucked at the strings of her zither. It was almost as if the entire world around her harmonized with her music since the flowers and the grass nearby swayed and turned with the rhythm of the beat while the wind blended with her notes.

“Right. My younger sister enjoys playing the zither in her spare time. Compared to the past, her ability at playing it has improved

so much that even I can't help but feel intoxicated by the music she plays." Qin Xiao sighed in approval of his sister's music.

"Yes, your sister has grown skillful in the art of the zither since she is able to influence the heart and mind of a human with her music." Jian Chen agreed. The effects of her music had been more than enough for Jian Chen to recognize her improvement.

He calmly walked to the pavilion with Qin Xiao. The two of them sat at a nearby table to listen to the next ballad of the zither without disturbing her.

If the second daughter of the Tianqin clan saw Jian Chen and Qin Xiao enter her audience of one, she did not make notice of it. Her eyes remained unmoving as she focused completely on her zither, playing earnestly. In this one moment, her eyes were solely glued on her zither and nothing else in the world mattered to her.

The ballad continued on for some time before finally receding to silence. Her tender fingers paused their movements. She lifted her eyes away from the zither at last and moved them to Jian Chen and Qin Xiao, who were nearby. Her eyes registered them with a bright gleam of light that contained a lively look like they were sentient.

Yet, her face remained covered by a single piece of cloth when she smiled at the two, making her exact appearance unclear. "Brother, my apologies, I've kept you waiting. My lord Jian Chen, I had no idea you would come in as well."

There was a faint smile on Jian Chen's face when he nodded, but



when he was about to speak, Qin Xiao beat him to it, “Sister, you spend more than enough time wearing that veil outside. Why do you wear it in our own home as well?”

“Wearing this veil has become something of a habit for me. To take it off now would be a strange change.” She softly replied. Turning to Jian Chen, she continued, “If I remember correctly, the last time we met, lord Jian Chen, was a year ago. Have you been well since our last meeting?”

A bright smile appeared on his face, “Worry not, this one has been well. On the other hand, you seem to have made great progress in the art of the zither.”

“This girl has been studying the art of the zither for as long as she’s lived. Every day I try my best to study and dedicate myself to the art. Even now, my skills are still lacking in comparison to someone like the famous Heavenly Enchantress.”

Jian Chen’s heart skipped a beat when he heard mention of that name. “Perhaps you wish to follow the Heavenly Enchantress’ footsteps and delve into the way of the zither rather than Saint Force?”

“I’d bet so. My sister has always been a smart one with a power of comprehension stronger than others. Even her skill at cultivation is decent, but what made my father disappointed was her lack of motivation to continue with her cultivation. As a result, she is only at the fifth layer of Saint Force. She spends her time focusing on the zither instead. Although the ballads she plays are captivating, they are rather useless against an enemy.” Qin Xiao shrugged his

shoulders noncommittally. The fact that his own sister was so entranced by the zither had been the source of headaches for him. He did not see any applicable way it could be used for cultivation.

Even though her brother had criticized the usefulness of the zither, she did not grow angry. Instead, she explained, “Brother, you underestimate the zither. I have not yet reached the beginning steps of the way of the zither, that’s all. The profound mysteries of the music that a zither produces is something you couldn’t possibly imagine. In the case that one truly embarks on this path of cultivation, then the fighting prowess they bring is far beyond what Saint Force could compare to.”

“Aside from the Heavenly Enchantress, I have never heard of anyone else using the music of a zither as a way of cultivation. Sister, you don’t have any guidance nor teachings on how to embark on this path. To try and find this path by yourself is difficult. Why not cultivate with Saint Force instead?” Qin Xiao pleaded.

She shook her head in response, “This is what I plan to do with my life. I will use all of my energy to accomplish my goal, and even if there lies nothing at the end of my path, I will not regret it.”

“Qin Xiao, if your sister is so set on this path, then let her walk the path she chooses. Although the music your sister plays is far below what is needed to fully captivate the soul of a person, it has reached a point of maturity in its own right. As long as your sister continues to practice and study, she will grow and learn. She will definitely reach the way of the zither she talks of.”

Qin Xiao could only sigh in response to Jian Chen's words. In his mind, he really couldn't approve of the arduous path his sister set for herself.

"Thank your lord Jian Chen for your encouragement. My name is Qin Qin. Please feel free to call me so in the future rather than sister of Qin Xiao, my lord." She smiled, but the smile was hard to distinguish behind the veil.

"Qin Qin!" Jian Chen said to himself, "So that is your name? It is a delightful sounding name that suits a lady like yourself."

The lively light in Qin Qin's eyes danced as she looked at Jian Chen and nodded. Without another word, her eyes turned back to the old-looking zither on the table, and her fingers moved to caress the strings once more to induce a melodious sound.

Looking at the zither, Jian Chen hesitated for a moment, "Miss Qin Qin, this one has once had the pleasure of meeting the Heavenly Enchantress in Mercenary City. In the future should I meet her again, this one will ask to see if she will impart any guidance on you."

Qin Qin's eyes lit up with suggestion, "Then I will be in your care, my lord. To ask the Heavenly Enchantress to be my master, that alone has been my greatest desire since young."

Jian Chen did not remain at the Tianqin clan long after that. Talking briefly with Qin Xiao and Qin Qin for a moment longer, he finally left the clan after a short discussion with Qin Xiao about the

next thing he had to accomplish. Leaving Walaurent City, Jian Chen flew back to the Dazhou Kingdom once more.

Jian Chen's trip was uneventful trip when he finally crossed into the Dazhou Kingdom. He headed to the palace where he had the king welcome him. No objections were made and Jian Chen to used the Space Gate to travel hundreds of thousands of kilometers to reappear on the other side in the forests near Mercenary City.

Confirming his own position on a map, Jian Chen rose into the air and shot into the sky, headed to the city. He planned on entering Mercenary City to buy several things for elder Xiu and to hopefully find things worth his notice.

# Chapter 598: Return To Mercenary City

## (Four)

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Mercenary City was situated at the very center of the entire continent as if to serve as the heart of the land. Although there were no walls, the territory that the city spanned over was no less than the seven Capital Cities. In name, it was the most well known city in the continent.

Mercenary City was the very symbol of divinity in the heart of every single mercenary. As the holy grounds for every mercenary, the name of the city itself represented freedom and peace.

A series of complicated regulations and laws upheld the security and peace of Mercenary City. There was no division between the strong and the weak. A Heaven Saint Master's status was no different than a common villager's status. Everywhere else on the continent, the law of the jungle reigned supreme. However, here that law was non-existent. Fighting was prohibited within the boundary of the city, and the very moment any person entered the city, even the strongest wouldn't be able to use their strength without fearing the consequences.

This prohibition led many people to refer to Mercenary City as the safest asylum to live. As long as one lived here, there would be no need to worry about being chased down and killed by anyone.

Over the course of history, plenty of people disregarded this law and broke it. Each and every single one of the lawbreakers had been killed without mercy, even Heaven Saint Masters. Coincidentally, there had never been a case of murder that

happened within the city.

The only thing that could serve to establish your status within the city was money. With money, one would be able to live a life that even a prince would envy. Without money, one would have to live on the streets; even finding food would prove to be a challenge.

With the tiger cub in hand, Jian Chen flew across the sky at a steady pace. From afar, a series of large buildings could be seen stretching into the sky. From above, Jian Chen could just barely see the transparent barrier that surrounded the entire city.

His eyes carefully studied the barrier with curiosity. He had only been to Mercenary City once before, but even that had only given him a small bit of information when it came to the city. He knew several things, such as it was forbidden to fight within the city and that the barrier that spanned across the sky had to do with that prohibition.

A series of roads and streets intersected one another throughout the entire area since Mercenary City possessed no walls. With roads leading in and out, mercenaries could travel through the city along with carts in numerous amounts. Despite the fact that there were no guards stationed anywhere, none of these mercenaries acted unruly like they might when they are in the wildlands of the continent. No matter where they were in the city, they acted nice and polite.

Touching down several kilometers away from the barrier, Jian Chen walked the rest of the way. Without a care for the nearly

transparent barrier, he walked into Mercenary City.

As soon as he entered the city, Jian Chen bought a Class 3 Magical Beast for him to ride throughout the city. Combined with the fact that Mercenary City was large and that Jian Chen was prohibited from flying, he would have to ride a magical beast mount if he wished to get to his destination swiftly.

Riding on top of the magical beast, Jian Chen traveled slowly through the major streets of the city to buy all sorts of delicacies from the street stalls. These were all gifts for the natives of Longevity Valley — for the little fatty in particular. He had never once traveled outside the valley and knew nothing about the outside world. This by extension meant that he had never once experienced the delicacies of the continent.

For half the day, Jian Chen walked through the streets. Using the money saved in his Space Ring, Jian Chen had gone on a wild shopping spree, and had managed to fill up five whole Space Belts before he had been satisfied. Hopping onto his mount, Jian Chen then rode straight for the drug stores.

About an hour later, Jian Chen arrived at a five-layered pavilion. This was where all sorts of priceless heavenly resources could be bought and sold.

“Mrowrrr...” As soon as Jian Chen and the tiger cub arrived in front of the pavilion, the tiger cub caught a whiff of the fragrant aroma from the heavenly resources. It called out with excitement from its spot in Jian Chen’s robe with such force that if Jian Chen hadn’t been holding it, the cub would have dashed into the

pavilion.

He tried his best to hide the faint smile on his face when he saw the impatience of the cub. Heavenly resources all over the age of a thousand were very rare in the Gesun Kingdom, and it had gone for a very long time without tasting such a delicacy.

With the cub in hand, Jian Chen strode into the pavilion. There were plenty of other customers shopping around the place ranging from mercenaries to merchants to attendants, who dashed around to help serve the customer. From their mouths, talks of discussion about what item to buy could be heard. Several of the mercenaries could be seen buying several hundred year old resources.

Looking around the place, Jian Chen could see that the first story of the pavilion sold several priceless drugs, but not a single heavenly resource could be seen.

This way of selling merchandise was not unfamiliar to Jian Chen. He knew that the more expensive wares would be on the higher levels of the pavilion, so without further ado, Jian Chen walked to the second story.

On this level, more expensive types of drugs could be seen along with several heavenly resources. The ages of these resources were below the age of five hundred, but even this second floor had plenty of customers.

Again without looking around, Jian Chen headed to the third floor, but when he reached the stairwell entrance, a guard moved



to stop him.

“My apologies sire, but the third floor on is restricted to customers with a purple card.” This guard apologetically informed him.

Without a word, Jian Chen flashed several purple cards for the man to see. At the sight of them, the guard smiled and relinquished the path to allow Jian Chen on his way.

Compared to the second floor, the third floor was quite peaceful. Only a few scant people could be seen haggling prices with the attendants here. On this floor, Jian Chen could finally see some of the more sealed heavenly resources displayed here and there. Their prices were clearly written right below the caseboard with a bottom line price of ten thousand purple coins. Some of the more ancient wares surpassed prices of fifteen thousand purple coins, which was an exorbitant price.

The thousand year old heavenly resources caused the tiger cub to open its eyes wide and start to lick its lips in anticipation.

“My lord, how may I serve you today?” A twenty something year old female attendant suddenly came into view.

Slowly walking up to one of the more well-preserved heavenly resources, Jian Chen spoke, “I wish to speak some business with you. Have your shopkeeper come out to talk.”

She looked at Jian Chen oddly, but without any further complaints, she went off to look for the shopkeeper.

Soon enough, a middle-aged woman with grandiose-looking robes followed the previous attendant in. Coming to a stop right in front of Jian Chen, the attendant smiled and introduced Jian Chen to the woman, “My lord, this figure here is the shopkeeper.”

Looking Jian Chen up and down, the woman gave a small smile on her face, “My name is Ochire, shopkeeper of this pavilion. Might I ask to know your name, my lord? You give me a familiar feeling, as if I have seen your visage somewhere before.”

Smiling in return, Jian Chen said, “Shopkeeper Ochire, let us talk business. Does your store happen to have any heavenly resources over the age of a thousand?”

Seeing that Jian Chen was unwilling to disclose his identity, Ochire decided not to push it any further and smiled. “Certainly, we have several of those heavenly resources in stock, but not by much. In total, there are twenty-eight of them over the age of a thousand. My lord, if you are asking such a question, do you perhaps mean to purchase them?”

“Shopkeeper Ochire, please calculate the total price of the twenty-eight then.” Jian Chen replied.

The woman was taken aback. Uncertain of how to phrase the question, she asked, “My lord, do you mean to say that you wish to purchase all twenty-eight of them? That will certainly not be a

small sum of money.”

Jian Chen nodded his head and spoke no more of the issue.

With that confirmation, a small smile lit up Ochire’s face. A customer purchasing over twenty thousand-year old heavenly resources was an extremely rare sight to behold.

Hurriedly taking out an abacus, Ochire started to total up the sum of all the items. “My lord.” She began, “Each of the twenty-eight heavenly resources has varying ages. Some are just thousand years old, some are two or three thousand years old. Combined with the fact that some of them are of rare species, each one of the heavenly resources will be a different price. As such, the cumulative price will be one million thirty thousand purple coins. If my lord is willing to purchase them in bulk, then we will discount the remaining thirty thousand purple coins for a grand total of a million purple coins. Is that to your satisfaction?”

“Correct. Then the twenty-eight heavenly resources will be bought for a million purple coins.” Jian Chen handed a purple card over to Ochire. He knew a little bit about the pricing of heavenly resources, so even though the ages of the heavenly resources were all different, Jian Chen knew that the price given to him had been a very fair one. In the smaller cities, heavenly resources such as these would be priced for far higher.

Taking the purple card into her trembling hands, Ochire said, “Should my lord ever come to my pavilion for any future thousand year old heavenly resources, this servant here will be sure to give a favorable price.”

With a small hum to himself, Jian Chen asked, “Shopkeeper Ochire, would you perhaps have any heavenly resources over the age of ten thousand?”

“What? Heavenly resources above the age of ten thousand?” Ochire was astounded. Regarding Jian Chen with a stupefied look, she answered, “My lord, how could heavenly resources of that age possibly be that easy to find? Ten thousand year old heavenly resources are something that the entire Tian Yuan Continent can only stumble upon once in awhile. Not only are they impossible to find in markets, each time one appears, they are worth countless of purple coins. They are something that allow people to become anew and are known to many as ingredients to immortality. Many of the experts standing at the zenith of the continent would use such things to extend their lifespans.”

“Perhaps shopkeeper Ochire knows of a place where such heavenly resources could be purchased at?” Jian Chen pressed on.

Pausing to think for a moment, Ochire finally responded, “According to what I know, ten thousand year old heavenly resources are all rare. With each appearance of one, they have shown up in only the Capital Cities and Mercenary City. To my knowledge, they have appeared once every three years or so among the seven Capital Cities, and once a year here. A tremendous auction house always follows two days after its announcement, so if my lord is still in need of one, then your best luck would be at the auction house.”

# Chapter 599: Spirit Of The Barrier (One)

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“Shopkeeper Ochire, thank you for your information.” Jian Chen cupped his hands in gratitude. “But where might this yearly auction house take place? There are plenty of auction houses in this city after all.”

“Perhaps you are not as familiar with Mercenary City as I thought if you know not even this, my lord.” Ochire replied with a small burst of laughter. “Then, please allow this servant to explain. There are indeed plenty of auction houses within Mercenary City, but those are all privately owned auction houses. There is only a single auction house that is regulated by the city. As long as my lord makes the proper inquiries, you will learn of the place almost instantly.

“It is how this auction house is run and what it sells that marks it different from the others. With Mercenary City itself running the auction every year, many extremely rare objects can be seen from it, ergo the ten thousand year old heavenly resource. They have always been sold by this auction house.

“Relevantly, the ten thousand year old heavenly resource that my lord wishes for will always appear at that auction house, but each time they appear, it has always been a fight of money to purchase it. If my lord is adamant on purchasing one, then you must prepare yourself a large sum of purple coins to purchase it.”

“Indeed, thank you for your warning.” Jian Chen gratefully replied

The shopkeeper smiled, “My lord, you are far too polite. This is nothing that could warrant your thanks. The future patronage of my lord would be more than enough to keep this servant happy.” She gave her response before handing the purple coins back to Jian Chen after processing the purchase. Taking out an exquisite Space Belt, she handed it to Jian Chen, “My lord, here is your purple card and the heavenly resources are within this belt. Please hold it well.”

Obediently taking the purple card back into his own Space Ring, Jian Chen took the Space Belt and inspected the inner contents to ensure everything was there. Smiling, he stored it in his Space Ring and left the pavilion after bidding Ochire farewell.

Freely walking up to the windowsill, Ochire watched as Jian Chen walked further and further away. With furrowed eyebrows, she began to mutter to herself, “Just who is that person? It is strange to think that he is familiar to me. It’s as if I’ve seen him somewhere before, but I haven’t left Mercenary City as of late, and the amount of acquaintances I have is very low; where could I have possibly met a youngster like this before...”

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Taking the Class 3 Magical Beast mount for a ride, Jian Chen held a radish-shaped heavenly resource for the tiger cub to munch on. With bright and spirited eyes, the cub happily devoured the entire thing.

Heavenly resources for the tiger cub were an extremely rare and delicious delicacy. They were the most delicious and blessed

objects in the world to the cub.

Eyeing the cub with a small trace of adoration, Jian Chen could not help but fondly smile. In the short period of time the cub had been in Jian Chen's care, it had managed to worm its way into his heart so to see the tiger cub so happy made him feel equivalently happy.

By asking the people of the city, Jian Chen had managed to find out the auction house Ochire had mentioned.

At the center of Mercenary City was an extremely large auction house that stood about thirty meters tall. Its architecture was grand and impressive even in comparison to the mighty city it was in. This auction house was very distinguishable, like the head of a beast in the open plains.

Right as Jian Chen was about to take another step, Ziyang's voice suddenly popped into his mind, "Ah! Master! This is stardust! Master, we've found some stardust!"

Repeating Ziyang's words, Qingsuo spoke up excitedly, "Master, quickly now! Take the stardust with you. It is a priceless item needed to forge the sword!"

Ignited by the words of Ziyang and Qingsuo, Jian Chen could feel a joyous smile appear on his lips. He knew that in order to craft the Azulet swords, he would need specific material, and as long as he had the material, he would be one step closer to forging the swords.

Excited by the two spirits, Jian Chen began to question the two, “Ziying, Qingsuo, where is this stardust located?” He had no idea what stardust looked like. If not for the two spirits, he would not be able to distinguish it from any other item in the city.

Right away, a strange but mysterious sensation began to pull at his mind as he spoke. At this moment, he felt a strange attraction as if some sort of magical connection was drawing him to a very specific location.

When Jian Chen’s eyes hovered over the auction house run by Mercenary City in front of him, a response from within his head could be felt. With this sensation, he could more or less surmise a general approximation that the stardust would be located within this auction house.

“Master, you must take the stardust! As long as stardust is added to the swords when being forged, the quality of the blade will go up to a completely different level. It is far away from being a weapon for a god, it can still be considered an ultimate magic weapon.” The excited voice of Qingsuo reverberated through Jian Chen’s mind.

“Stardust is a material used for weapons of the Immortal level, I never would have imagined that they would appear even here. Master, no matter what the cost, you must obtain them!” Ziying spoke urgently. It would appear that stardust was an extremely important item to it.

Seeing just how much Ziying and Qingsuo was putting emphasis



on the stardust, Jian Chen could feel himself growing serious. His eyes fixated themselves onto the auction house and immediately dismounted from his magical beast mount to enter.

This stardust might have been in the auction house, but the actual house had not yet started any of their auctions and was thus unavailable to the audience. It would be at least another two days before it would start, perhaps the stardust would appear then.

Afterwards, Jian Chen had spent the rest of his time walking the streets. Going from one drugstore to another, he purchased another fifty or so thousand year old heavenly resources and spent well over two million purple coins.

The stab in his wallet had not been a stab to his heart however. The growth of the tiger was far more important than money, and since the tiger required an exponentially large amount of time to grow, heavenly resources were the only way to expedite this procedure.

Jian Chen wasn't short on money either since he took the purple coins from the Space Rings of the Heaven Saint Masters he killed along with any other valuable item. There was still the money from the treasuries of both the Pingyang Kingdom and the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom that he had not yet exhausted along with the monster cores. These alone were enough to make Jian Chen into a mobile treasury with the raw amount of value he had on him.

It was only until dusk that Jian Chen finally stopped his window-shopping spree through the streets and settled in one of the inns to

wait for the auction two days from now.

There would undoubtedly be heavenly resources over the age of several thousand years old at this auction house as well as the stardust needed to forge the Azulet swords. This meant that the upcoming auction event would definitely be an event that Jian Chen couldn't afford to miss. In the same vein, this meant that Jian Chen would have to delay his trip to Longevity Valley for another two days.

Later that evening in his own grand room, Jian Chen sat on top of his bed in the midst of concentration. He had wanted to try his best to come to understand the energy of the world along with the piece of a Saint Tier Battle Skill to become a Saint Ruler as soon as possible. By his side, the tiger cub wolfed down three heavenly resources and quickly fell into a deep slumber to process it into energy.

The candle wick within the room had long since gone out, leaving the entire room in pitch black darkness. Even if one's hand were in front of one's face, the fingers would not be visible at all. But in this darkness, the room was exceptionally quiet so that even a needle could be heard if it were dropped onto the ground.

In the skies above Mercenary City, the gigantic barrier that had spanned across the entire city pulsed once. Shortly afterwards, a single girl's voice could just barely be heard from the skies.

"This, this is master's scent! But, didn't master leave this world already? Why do I smell his scent then. Did master return then?"

This clear voice had been clear in the dark skies over the city, but even with the peacefully quiet city, the sound did not travel far.

“Yes, this is master’s scent. But it’s faint. Very faint. Did master really return?” The clear voice reverberated through the skies. From the voice however, the tint of excitement could be heard. Soon enough, the wave of excitement sped into the city and caused everyone to feel slightly odd, but no one could pinpoint the reason why.

“I’ve found it! It’s here! Master’s scent is definitely coming from here! Hee hee, master has to have returned, this must be his way of testing me. Hee hee, how good my nose is. No matter how faint master’s scent is, I will definitely always be able to find it.” The voice spoke, this time closer to the city. It had already traveled to the inn Jian Chen was in and phased into the building.

From within his room, Jian Chen’s ear twitched slightly and caused his eyes to open suddenly. At the same time, two bolts of light flew out from his eyes and illuminated the candlewick in the room to light up the room.

Jian Chen’s eyes swept across the room vigilantly. The darkness was not a problem to him since he could see everything clearly.

“Who’s speaking?” Jian Chen asked seriously. He had heard that clear voice earlier, but his presence had told him no one was around at all, causing him to be extra vigilant.

Even if Mercenary City was extremely safe, he could not afford to drop his guard.

“It’s faint. Very faint! Master’s scent is here.” This time, the strange voice could be heard originating from the same room Jian Chen was in. It had been extremely clear to hear, but no matter how much Jian Chen looked around, he could not see just what human or ghost was speaking.

# Chapter 600: Spirit Of The Barrier (Two)

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Bolting straight up from his bed, Jian Chen landed gracefully on the ground with his eyes carefully studying the room. He spread his presence so that it covered the entirety of the inn, and began to test to see who was there. What disappointed him was the fact that not a single being was detected.

He had clearly heard the distinguishable voice of a person near him earlier. It was not the same as a Saint Ruler pitching his or her voice since a Saint Ruler could speak directly into an ear. This voice was different. It was a clear voice that anyone within earshot could detect, but even though it came from his side, the strange and bone-chilling thing was the fact that not a single living thing or spirit could be seen.

“Who is speaking? Come out now!” Jian Chen commanded with a solemn face. This was a first. He had never experienced this before.

As if responding to Jian Chen’s question, a previously dark spot near the corner of his room suddenly began to glow with light. Wisps of light began to gather in this one spot. They slowly condensed to reveal the silhouette of a person.

As the light dissipated from the room, a young woman, who looked to be around twenty-three years old, came into view. She was quite cute, and was slightly pink to the eyes. The only defect from this otherwise beautiful figure was the fact that her body was eerily fake. It was not an actual human body, and it looked to be made from only light. Following her appearance, light filled the room and dispersed any remaining darkness.

The pupils of Jian Chen's eyes dilated as he stared at the young woman as if he had seen a ghost.

"Who are you?" Jian Chen growled. Jian Chen was extremely vigilant against this foreign threat of untold power. This girl could be an evil being after all.

Curiously, the young woman stared at Jian Chen before circling him several times. Even while she walked around him, her eyes never left his body as she muttered, "It's faint. Master's scent is very faint, but you are clearly not my master. Hey, who are you then?"

Her words left Jian Chen at a loss. Scratching his head in befuddlement, Jian Chen still remained calm while he replied, "This one is Jian Chen. Just who might you be? Why have you come to my room?"

"Jian Chen?" Her eyebrows rose as if she was thinking carefully. "Who's Jian Chen?"

"Jian Chen would be me!" The muscles in Jian Chen's face twitched.

Looking at Jian Chen, the young woman asked, "You're Jian Chen? No no, you're not my master. My master's name isn't Jian Chen. He isn't as weak as you are either. Weird, why do I smell master's scent then? Did I smell wrong? No way! There's no way I would mistake master's scent for someone else's! No matter how

faint, I will be able to find it.”

Her eyes then spun around the room several times along with her face as she laughed and giggled at Jian Chen, “Big brother, why don’t you tell Little Spirit if you’ve seen my master before. Where is my master? Why has he not come back in forever? Does he not want Little Spirit anymore, or, even worse, did master forget about me??” At the last few words, the young woman’s eyes began to grow red as if she was ready to cry at any moment full of sorrow.

Seeing just how pathetic the young woman was becoming, Jian Chen felt an emotion tug at him from within. It was almost as if he was looking at a small child sadly despairing over the separation from her parents. She was alone and helpless, a pitiful creature to the eyes.

“Little sister, why don’t you tell me who you are? Who is your master? Perhaps I may have seen him before.” Jian Chen inquired. Right now, in his mind, he was trying his best to think of any possible person that could fit the bill as fast as he could.

“I’m Little Spirit! But people call me the spirit of the barrier. As for my master, you should know him, he’s the lord of this city!” She answered.

“The lord of this city?” Jian Chen uttered a low grunt of stupefaction. The lord of this city was a divine figure, and when the thought came to mind, Jian Chen’s face immediately slackened, “What did you say? Your master is the lord of Mercenary City?”

“Hee hee, that’s right. Mercenary City is ruled by my master. Big brother, you do know my master! Tell me where my master is, okay? Big brother, I’m begging you.” Her face lit up when Jian Chen answered her, but it quickly turned into a look of pleading and pity as she began to beg him.

A breath of surprise escaped Jian Chen’s lips as he stared dumbfounded at this twenty something year old woman in front of him.

The lord of mercenary city — that title had only one person in its history — and that person would be the strongest of the Tian Yuan Continent, Mo Tianyun!”

This girl right in front of him, her master was actually the one hailed as the strongest on the continent — Mo Tianyun! That realization was like a clap of thunder to his ears.

A considerable amount of time past before Jian Chen finally regained his wits. Still staring rather shocked at the girl, he just had to ask once more, “Little sister, did I hear you correctly? The lord of Mercenary City, Mo Tianyun, is your master?” Even now, Jian Chen was doubting what he had heard.

“Yes, of course! He is Little Spirit’s master! Even for her entire life, Little Spirit has not forgotten about master! It was master that give Little Spirit her name, you know, but master left a long time ago and never saw me again. Little Spirit really misses master.” As she got to the end of her words, the little girl’s face became



crestfallen. At this moment, she truly looked alone.

As if a bomb had gone off, Jian Chen did not know what to think. He could only stare at this girl tongue-tied while trying to find his mind to respond.

This eccentric young woman — was she really a person of the same lifetime of Mo Tianyun?

However, with that thought, an extremely terrifying question came to mind that Jian Chen couldn't help but tremble and shake about. If this young woman was truly a person from the lifetime of Mo Tianyun, then just how long had this person lived?

“Big brother, please tell Little Spirit, okay? Where is my master now? Why hasn't he come back for Little Spirit? Little Spirit misses master.” While Jian Chen had remained quiet, the young woman's eyes had begun to grow teary and pitiful.

Even Jian Chen felt a twinge of sympathy when he saw her pathetic expression. The words she was asking, however, would render anyone speechless. Jian Chen had no idea how to respond.

Mo Tianyun was a figure of antiquity. Even if he was the strongest on the continent, he could not withstand the corrosion of time. Many generations had already past since his pinnacle, and only the illustrious fame his name brought was left behind. Jian Chen had never once seen Mo Tianyun before.

“Big brother, please tell Little Spirit, okay? Where is my master?” The silence from Jian Chen had prompted the young woman to plead again.

Sighing to himself, Jian Chen turned to look at the woman with a slight amount of fear, “Little sister, I’m afraid to disappoint you, but I have never seen your master before.”

“Impossible! You’re lying to Little Spirit! Little Spirit’s nose is strong! Big brother, you can’t lie to Little Spirit! Big brother, you have master’s scent. You have to have seen master before!” She howled in disbelief.

Giving a small shake of his head, Jian Chen forced out a smile, “Little sister, you must be mistaken. I’ve never seen your master before. Your master may have been the strongest this continent has ever seen, but too much time has gone by. Your master has to have reached the end of his age span by now.”

“You lie! Master was a magical figure who had already broken free of most of the binds he faced, even age itself! How could he reach the end of his life span then? Big brother, you can’t lie to Little Spirit!” The very notion of her master dying from age made her angry beyond belief.

Rubbing his temples with some pain, Jian Chen was at a loss on how to deal with this noisy woman in front of him.

“Big brother, please! You have to tell Little Spirit where master is, okay? Little Spirit will definitely pay you back.” This time she

added a second phrase to sweeten the deal.

“Little sister, it’s not that I don’t wish to tell you. It’s that I’ve never seen your master before in truth.” Jian Chen helplessly responded.

As if worried now, the young woman began to howl and cry, “But, but, but! You’ve clearly master’s scent! Even if it’s faint, Little Spirit can smell it. Brother, you have to have seen master before.”

“Is there?” Jian Chen carefully looked at his own clothes in strange suspicion. This woman in front of him was adamant that he had the scent of Mo Tianyun, but he was absolutely convinced that he had never seen him before.

Then, a sudden thought came to Jian Chen. “Little sister, perhaps I have something that your master left behind. That may be why you sense your master’s scent.”

“Is that really it? Big brother, have you really not seen my master before?” The young woman’s face grew incredulous.

“I vow that I, Jian Chen, have never seen your master before!” Jian Chen could no longer bear her questioning, so in order to absolve him from any future questions, he made a pledge in such a manner.

Dazed, the young woman stood transfixed at the spot. She stared

earnestly at Jian Chen ,trying to confirm what he had said herself. After a standoff for what felt like an eternity, she finally let out a cry of sorrow, “Master, where in the world have you gone? Do you no longer want Little Spirit anymore? Little Spirit has missed you so much! Master, where are you!?” She cried out bitterly. As she cried, her body continued to convulse with shudders, and Jian Chen slowly watched her body start to fade before finally disappearing. With her body gone, the room plunged back into darkness.

“Waaaaah... Master, where did you go? You have to come back to find Little Spirit. Little Spirit wants to see you so much!” The darkness of the night continued to convey the grieved crying sounds of the young woman before finally waning off into silence.

Jian Chen felt influenced by her tears, and grew uneasy as he tried to figure out the reason why she had appeared before him in the first place.

Rekindling the light once more, Jian Chen opened the window to look at the sky. As of right now, it was roughly an hour past midnight, meaning that it was now one of the quietest moments in the city, so the crying of the young woman would not be heard by many, if any.

Shutting the window once more, Jian Chen sat back on his bed. He took out the Space Ring containing the three fist-sized patches of white animal skin to give them a good look.

Jian Chen did not know the history of these three objects nor did he know where they originated from. He had once thought that

these three patches of animal skin would somehow lead to a hint of the Saint Ruler who oversaw the destruction of the Bi family.

“Perhaps Mo Tianyun left these three patches before in the past.” Jian Chen thought.